

Miscellaneous Reflections,

Occasion'd by the

COMET

Which appear'd

In December 1680.

Chiefly tending to explode Popular
Superstitions.

Written to a Doctor of the Sorbon,

By Mr. BAYLE.

Translated from the *French.*

To which is added,
The Author's LIFE.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N,
Printed in the Year 1708.

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Miscel.

*Miscellaneous Reflections,
on occasion of the Comet which
appear'd in December 1680.*

Written to a Doctor of the Sorbon.

SECT. CLXI. *Conjectures on the Manners of
a Society of Atheists.*

AFTER all these Reasonings, I make no scruple to declare, wou'd you know my Thoughts of a Commonwealth of Atheists, That as to Manners and Civil Life 'twou'd exactly resemble a Commonwealth of Pagans; 'twill indeed require very severe Laws, and very well executed. But do's not every State require the same? And dare we stir out of our Houses, were Robbery, Murder, and other ways of Violence publicly conniv'd at? Isn't it owing purely to the Vigor the King has newly given the Laws against Bullies and Pickpockets, that we are not insulted in the Streets of *Paris* night and day? Were it not for this we shou'd be expos'd to the same Violence as in former Reigns, tho the Preachers and Confessors discharge their Duty much better than heretofore. In spite of the

A a

Wheel,

Wheel, and Rigor of the Magistrate, and Vigilance of the Civil Officers, how many Violences and Felonys are committed on the very Spot, and the very hour Criminals are executed? It may be said, without invective, that Human Justice is for the most part the Base of Human Vertue: The Moment she slackens the Reins, few are cautious how they offend.

SECT. CLXII. *That Human Laws are for the most part the Base of Human Vertue. Impurity an Argument of this.*

THIS is evident from the Example of Uncleaness. Christians are all agreed, this Sin's strictly prohibited by the Laws of God; the Church continually preaches against it: Yet I question whether one Man in a hundred is free from the Stain. For the Womens part, we must do 'em this Justice, that much a greater number of them abstain from this Sin; not that they have naturally a greater stock of Vertue than the Men, or that their Love of God gives 'em more strength to resist the Temptation. What then? that they are restrain'd by the hard Laws of Honor, exposing 'em to Infamy, whenever they yield to the Inclinations of Nature. Certain it is, did not Men annex Honor and Reputation to Womens Chastity, the Sex wou'd be as generally dissolute as they, and in all probability give themselves a greater loose, because 'tis very probable this Passion is more violent in Women than Men.

SECT.

SECT. CLXIII. *That Men have a greater sense of Honor than Women.*

IN effect, did living chafly concern a Man's Honor as it do's a Woman's, 'tis very probable, as few Gentlemen wou'd venture to leud Houses, as now betray their Post out of Cowardice. Few Gentlemen do this, very few who in a prospect of Glory won't despise the greatest Dangers, and look Death in the Face. The time has been you cou'd scarce find a Man in *France*, who had not fought a Duel or two on the least nicety of Honor, tho he ran the hazard of being kill'd on the Spot, and the utmost danger of the Law if he escap'd. 'Tis probable then, were Chastity the way to Glory, and Leudness that to Infamy, Gentlemen wou'd be as seldom ingag'd in scandalous Gallantrys, as now disgrac'd for want of Courage. In the mean time we see abundance more Ladys of noble Blood, defam'd for their Incontinence, than Gentlemen degraded for Cowardice. A violent Presumption, the Women wou'd outdo the Men, might they gratify their Desires without hazarding a Reputation; and the Men gain a greater Conquest o'er their amorous Passions than the Women, were their Honor as much at stake. Say, this proceeds from Womens not having such a Command o'er their Appetites as Men, and that a fear of Contempt makes deeper Impressions on one Sex than the other. Prove it by this Instance, that there are fewer Women who conquer their Curiosity by the fear of Shame, than Men who conquer the fear of Death, the violentest of all Human Passions, by that of Infamy:

famy: Or rather say, Nature has given Women a more rebellious Constitution than Men; 'tis alike to me. Still the true reason of Womens flying Incontinence infinitely more than Men, is the Mens placing the Glory of that Sex in Chastity; whereas they are so far from placing their own Glory in this Vertue, that a Man who dare boast of such a Gift, must expose himself to a deal of Laughter.

SECT. CLXIV. *What, generally speaking, are the true Causes of Chastity in Women.*

YET don't imagine it's my Opinion, that every Woman's Vertue is owing to a fear of Infamy. God forbid I shou'd pass a Judgment so injurious to the Grace of the Holy Spirit. I have already declar'd, and declare once more, I except a good Number out of the general Rule, such as are govern'd by the true Spirit of Christianity, and whom God preserves in the most Epidemical Contagions, as appears by this Scripture; * *Reliqui mihi septem millia virorum qui non curvaverunt genua ante Baal.* But after this Declaration, I don't see the strangeness of my taxing most Human Vertues of Falshood, especially the Chastity of Women. If they who have carry'd this Duty to the rigor, examine themselves, they'l find, or I'm much mistaken, that the thought of *what will the World say* has conduc'd to it more than any other Motive. How many of 'em are the true Copys of *Amarillis* in *Pastor Fido*, and say in the Secret of their Soul, or a tender *Tete a Tete*;

* Rom. 11. 4.

*Happy ye Savage Rangers of the Plains !
Whom bounteous Nature to no Rule restrains :
Blest with Desires, and of no Guilt afraid,
Your Laws of Love by Love alone are made.
But O ! Inhuman human Laws decree,
That Death a Penalty for Love must be !*

.....
*Yet weak's the Lover's Flame which Death can aw !
O were that all the Sanction of the Law !
But holy Honour ! Thou alone canst bind
Inviolably fast each noble Mind !
Thee, Goddess, I adore, to Thee I bow,
And consecrate a Virgin's tender Vow :
Tho hard's the Sentence, at thy cruel Call,
A Sacrifice to Thee my bleeding Love must fall.*

The Law, you see, which punishes Love with the loss of Life, is not the cause of their passionate Murmurs. Loss of Honor is all they dread. They're persuaded God can pardon all, but Man ne'er do's ; so that the whole Mystery lies in blinding the World, which let me tell 'em is no very easy matter : therefore, when secure from censure, they stand not on much Ceremony. If to this you add the old Maxim, *Cast a est quam ne-mo rogavit* ; that Modesty which springs from Education, and prevents the most amorous making all the Advances ; a design of enhancing their Favors, and quickning by delays, which yet sometimes destroy the Lover's Appetite ; the pride of an unblemish'd Reputation ; the thought of gaining the Esteem of those they resist, and a Husband perhaps into the Bargain ; a certain Greatness of mind, which won't bear a single witness of

their weakness; * the disagreeable ways of a Lover, his ill-timing things, his Indiscretion: Add, I say, all this together, you'll find the true Principle of the Sexes Continence, without having recourse to the Power of Religion.

SECT. CLXV. *What an Injury the Impurity of Christians do's the Christian Religion.*

THIS Remark on the Impurity of Christians, brings a passage to my Mind out of Sir Paul Rycaut's State of the Ottoman Empire: *That the Turks laugh at our speaking of the strictness of the Christian Religion in allowing only one Wife, and making a familiarity with any other Woman unlawful.* 'Tis true, adds he, to our exceeding Confusion, the Dissoluteness of our Lives and Manners gives these Infidels too just Occasion of Reproach and Raillery, and of telling us, our Practice destroys our Principles. They are scandaliz'd, not only at the Numbers, who violate the holy Rules of Christianity by an impure and abominable Life, but at the municipal Laws and known Privileges authorizing Fornication. This they prove from the publick Stews in Italy. They know Impurity is a kind of Merchandize and Traffick at Venice and Naples; That the Courtizans at Rome, and Cantonera's in Spain, compose a Body in the State, and are under a legal Tax and Impost. They can't comprehend the Reasons on which this Policy is founded, nor what the Italians can say in defence of such a Practice. This Author shou'd have carry'd his

* *Esto, ægram nulli quondam flexere mariti,
Non Lybiæ non ante Tyro despectus Iarbas,
..... Placitone etiam pugnabis amori.* Virg. *Æn.* 4.

Sincerity a little farther, and ingenuously own'd, that *Spaniards* and *Italians* are not the only Nations answerable. For, bating the *Tax and Imposts*, the Courtizans of *London* don't come behind those of *Spain* or *Italy* either in Numbers, Impudence, or Impunity. Such a Relation as Mr. *St. Didier's* were very useful to convince the World in this Point; and Sir *Paul Rycaut* shou'd not have forgot *Old England*, and so cheaply give up the Honor of other Nations to the Raillerys of Infidels.

In the mean time, this Reason of the *Italians*, which he says the *Turks* can't comprehend, affords a cogent Argument. 'Tis well known, the Reason of their tolerating leud Houses, is to prevent a worse Evil, an Impurity of a more execrable Kind, and to provide for the safety of Women of Honor. * *About two hundred and fifty years ago, Venice being in want of Courtizans, the Republick was oblig'd to procure a great Number from Foreign Parts.* Doglioni, who has written the *Memo- rable Affairs of Venice*, highly extols the Wisdom of the Republick in this Point, which secur'd the Chastity of Women of Honor, daily expos'd to publick Violences, the Churches and consecrated Places not being a sufficient Azylum for their Chastity. Time was when the Monks and Priests of Germany † were allow'd Concubines, on paying a certain yearly Duty to their Prelat. It's generally believ'd Avarice was the Cause of this shameful Indulgence. But 'tis more probable the design was to prevent their tempting modest Women, and to quiet the

* Mr. de St. Didier Relation de Venise, chap. de Courtizanes.

† See the Centum Gravamina apud Wolfium, Lect. Memor. vol. 2. p. 223, 226.

Uneasiness of Husbands, whose Resentments the Clergy do well to avoid. This, I say, furnishes a strong Argument, because it manifestly appears I had reason to affirm Religion is not a sufficient Curb to our Passions. In effect, you see the Christian Religion so incapable of restraining Incontinence, that there's a necessity of sacrificing one part of Woman-kind to preserve the other, and prevent a worse Evil, which notwithstanding is become very common. To which I add this Observation by the way, That Men are so convinc'd the solemnest Oaths are no Barrier to the Ambition of Princes; that tho they take special care to make 'em swear the observation of Treatys, yet they are in continual Alarms from the moment a neighbouring Prince puts his Troops in motion. Of this we see daily Examples. Now since Religion is incapable of subduing the Inclinations of Nature, there must be some other Principle of the Chastity of Women, and the fair dealings of Men, beside Conscience.

SECT. CLXVI. *A Mark for knowing when an Action proceeds from the Love of God.*

TELL me, pray, Can a Woman who won't prostitute her self and yet poisons her Husband, plead her Innocence in the first case, as an instance of Obedience to God? She imposes on her self, if she fancies any Action of hers can proceed from the Love of God, so long as she's capable of poisoning her Husband. For had this Love any power over her, cou'd she resolve on so execrable a Murder? And if she accomplishes it, and yet do's not prostitute her Body, must not this

this proceed from some particular Considerations of no force in any other Case? Isn't it evident she wou'd run into all the Excesses of Impurity as well as greater Crimes, were she prompted by Passions equally violent, and were the gratifying 'em not attended with some outward Circumstances likelier to restrain her? The reason then of her committing one of these Crimes and not another, springs intirely from her being able to accomplish one without a Witness, but not the other, without the danger of dishonouring her self the longest day of her Life: so that Religion's not the Cause of her Chastity. If Men examine themselves by this Rule, they'l appear to do little or nothing for the Love of God: and if they give an Alms, while taken up with an adulterous Gallantry, 'tis because they don't value Money, or are naturally apt to be mov'd at the sight of a miserable Object, or wou'd gain the Reputation of being kind to the Poor; or that they hope hereby to purchase a Right of sinning with Impunity.

How do Men deceive themselves! If they fancy, whatever is praise-worthy in 'em proceeds from a love of God, wou'd they not abstain from things the dearest to 'em, when found to be forbidden by him? One who loves Women, who gratifys his Passion for 'em as long as he's able, but is otherwise sober, keeps regular Hours, can't take a Bottle without a Headach, is besides a Poltron, and can handle neither Sword nor Pistol; wou'd not he be very modest in pretending any Merit before God, because he's no Drunkard, nor ever go's on the Highway? Let him renounce the Lust to which he's inclin'd, let him exercise this

Violence

Violence on himself on account of God's injoining it, and then every thing commendable in him shall pass for current; otherwise he'll allow us to believe his aversion to Drunkenness and Robbery, is a Vertue in which Religion has no concern, and in which he might persevere, tho he renounc'd Christianity.

Yet this is the real state of most of your virtuous Men, they have one favorite Passion: this they indulge to the utmost, and never offer it the least Violence. The rest of their Life is regular enough; they applaud themselves upon it, and imagine they make a great Sacrifice herein to Almighty God. Blind Wretches! were they capable of offering a worthy Sacrifice to God, they might easily conceive the darling Passion alone must be slain, and that we can't be said to sacrifice those to which our natural Constitution do's not incline.

SECT. CLXVII. *The true Reason of one Sin's being more customary than another.*

I Don't know whether all the World has had the same Reflection I have often made, upon seeing some Sins much more customary than others: I much doubt it; for in all probability, most People imagine this proceeds from a Notion of some Sins being so small and venial, that they are nothing in comparison of crying Iniquitys. But for my part, I can't assign this as the Reason; and I maintain on the contrary, it proceeds from some Sins giving universally a more sensible Pleasure than others, and at less Expence. For in short, Pleasure's the Life of all human Affairs; and say what you

you will, it's certain, Man's Inclination for Pleasure is stronger than his Aversion to Pain, and that he's much more affected with Good than Evil. He goes cheerfully to Pain and Sorrow, provided Pleasure's the way which leads to 'em ; and passes thro Sorrow and Pain, provided they lead to Pleasure. This is evident from the Conduct of so many young Women, who, born down by the victorious weight of present Pleasure, run headlong to Actions, which they are sure will be attended with a long train of bitter Sorrows ; and by the Example of so many Men, who having a thousand times experienc'd the sad Disorders of hard-drinking, yet follow the bent of their Appetites when the next occasion offers. Some of the *Italian* or *Spanish Corsi*, after an Affront given, shall lurk in a Hedge a Fortnight together waiting for their Enemy, content to browse upon Herbs or Roots for that time, so they have the Pleasure of seeing the Ambush succeed. The force of Pleasure must needs be strong, seeing in the small number of *Roman* Vestals we find so many Examples of Punishment ; a Punishment so terrible, so infamous, so doleful, so fraught with Execration, that the Wit of Man cou'd not contrive any thing beyond it for restraining the Sallys of Incontinence.

This being the Case, if you ask me, why Impurity is abundantly more common than Murder ; I answer, not because Murder is suppos'd much the more heinous Crime, but because there's infinitely a greater number govern'd by the Pleasure of Debauchery than that of Bloodshed. I own, the temporal Laws against Murder contribute to the difference ; but you'll allow me, if you weigh the matter rightly, that the Reason I alledg contributes much more.

SECT.

SECT. CLXVIII. *Reflections on the Habits
of Lying and Backbiting.*

SHALL I mention Vices still more prevailing than Uncleanneſs, to wit, Lying and Backbiting? Is it not plain, what renders theſe Vices ſo univerſal, is their being a never-failing ſource of Pleaſure? They are Vices highly gratifying our Vanity, our Envy, our Avarice, our Hatred, and conſequently muſt needs be very delightful. Your Merchants and Tradeſmen, by dint of Lying, and ſwearing ſuch a thing is worth ſo much, get ſomething continually above the Value: Lying then is their continual Pleaſure, and ſo they lye on eternally. They who lye out of Vain-glory, find an exceeding Pleaſure, imagining they paſs for Men of Importance on their bare word. Flatterers have a particular Satisfaction in Lying; they make 'em Friends, who pay ſometimes in ready Mony, ſometimes in Services as Occaſions preſent, ſometimes in Praise for Praise. Let the worſt come to the worſt, they have a ſecret Pleaſure in finding the blind ſide of the flatter'd, and avoiding his Diſpleaſure; for there be thoſe who never pardon one that's a Niggard of his Incenſe. As to your Backbiters, they have a Satisfaction in leſſening their Neighbor's Merit, which gives Jealouſy, and placing themſelves above him as far as lies in them; beſides its being a Talent for recommending 'em to the Female Sex, who are a conſiderable Party in the World.

This renders 'em agreeable Converſation among the Ladys, who, generally ſpeaking, are very vain and very envious; ſo that to win their Hearts effectually,

tually, they must not only lye and swear in their own Praises, but have the knack of running down the rest of their Sex, those especially who are Rivals in Beauty, Wit, or Rank. 'Tis wrong to make a Visit without some odd Story of these Concurrants, or those who frequent 'em. If they have heard none, why let 'em invent. He renounces the Character of a Galant, who sticks at Slander. Hence 'tis observ'd, Detraction reigns no where so absolutely as in Cabals of both Sexes; not only as this Familiarity begets a thousand Incidents to talk of, but as the Men learn in such a School all the Refinements of this Art.

This only *en passant*. My chief Design is to shew, that the Cause why those Vices are so common, is, that they please, and not that they pass for innocent. You shall quickly see what use I make on't.

SECT. CLXIX. *Whether Men have Reason to think Impurity a less Sin than Murder.*

IS it not true, that there's no Revelation nor sound Theological Reason, which informs us, that Impurity is a Sin less displeasing to God than Murder or Perjury? 'Tis indeed more favorable to publick Society than the other two. But this is not the Rule for determining the Quality of a Sin, it being a constant Maxim in sound Divinity, that the Wickedness of an Action consists in its being forbidden by God, without regard to the Distinction of natural and positive Laws. In consequence whereof, the Circumstances of the Sinner's state, of his Knowledg and Intention, vary its Turpitude, according to the Degrees of more or less.

I much doubt, whether the Weight of Pleasure leading us captive be capable of diminishing the Guilt, because habitual Sins in this Case, tho much more detestable than others, must yet be construed more venial; the Power of acquir'd Habits being a kind of Determination which empairs the Liberty of our Will. Nor can I think, that Consequences pernicious to Civil Society, aggravate the Sin before God, unless directly in the Sinner's Intention: for example, a *Banditti*, who murders a Man in the Corner of a Wood, not knowing who he is, or designing any more than just to get rid of him, and go off quietly with his Prey, is not more or less criminal in the sight of God, for that a great many Miserys, or a great deal of Good follows upon his Death. Perhaps he has kill'd a Man with a great Charge of Children, who must fall into extreme want by the loss of their Father; a Man who was the Support of the poor and oppressed, one who made up all Differences in his Neighborhood; or perhaps a Man without House or Home, ready himself for any Adventure. These Cases are of no account in the sight of God, being only accidental to the Murder. Two Persons fire a Pistol each at his Enemy; one kills his Man, the other misses, or perhaps hits him so luckily, that breaking an Impostume, which must otherwise have ended his Life in a few Days, puts him in a Condition to live out fifty Years in perfect Health, as we have some memorable * Examples in Story. Human Justice may make what Distinction it pleases, condemn one to Death, and let

* Camerarius, *Meditat. Histor.* vol. 3. l. 3. ch. 19.

the other pass, because the Action of one is an Injury to the Publick, but not the other; still they are both equally guilty at the Divine Tribunal. In like manner, tho the Publick is a Gainer by Impurity, and loses by Murder, it does not follow, that one is a less Sin than the other, because the Conscience of any thing's being expressly forbidden by God is sufficient to communicate all the Guilt which belongs to the Nature of Sin. The Sin of *Adam*, punish'd in so terrible a manner, deriv'd its whole Enormity from the bare Prohibition: for nothing in it self cou'd be more innocent than eating of any Fruit; there was no prejudice in't to human Society, or to the rest of the Creation. Let's agree then, that Christians, who abandon themselves to the Excesses of Incontinence, who lye perpetually, either to deceive or blacken their Neighbor's Reputation, or flatter his Vanity, are as guilty in the Sight of God as Murderers; since there's no Revelation, nor solid Reason informing 'em, that God has not equally forbid all these Crimes, or that he promises Impunity to one more than the other: And consequently, what renders some Sins more frequent than others, is not their being consider'd as small in the Sight of God.

SECT. CLXX. *Reflections on the Malice of Evil-speaking in some Cases.*

WHEN Preachers lay it out against Unclean-ness or Evil-speaking, they never fail to represent 'em as Sins of the blackest Dye. I don't except those who are reckon'd comode Casu-ists; for I have heard some, even of this sort, talk very

very roundly on these Heads. If you take their word, they are the very Extremity of Wickedness. Next time they preach, perhaps another Sin's the greatest; like the Panegyrist on the Saints, who always give the Preference to the Saint they preach for. But be that how it will, we can by no means pretend Ignorance as to the extreme Malice of Slander and Incontinence, they are painted out to us daily in the liveliest Colors. In reality, there are Slanders no less criminal than Murder, springing from such envenom'd Malice, that they fly like so many chew'd Bullets, rather than bare Words. When I see a Churchman take such Revenge of his Enemys, either by defamatory Libels, or sly under-hand Calumnys, I can't forbear saying, he offends God much more than he, who breaks a Fellow's Head or Arm with an oaken Cudgel: That Choler and Gall which flows freer in every Page, than his very Words or Ink, betray a Disposition more void of Christian Charity, than the Violences of a Man who kicks his Landlord down Stairs, and flings his Goods out of the Windows. But the Author strikes no body, he breaks no Bones. No; 'tis not his way of fighting, but the Arms he's train'd to he wields with a Vengeance. This is as if the * Wolf shou'd plead good Nature, because he does not kick. But the Author is prompted by Zeal, Vice shan't go unpunish'd. Stuff! A Prelate sticks on his Skirts, or attacks his Order. Here's the bottom of this mighty Zeal against the Prelate's Debauches, and

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Mirum,

Uc neque calce Lupus quenquam, neque dente petit bos.

Horat. Sat. 1. 1. 2.

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the true Reason of trumping up antient Canons. One sure Sign of this, is another Ecclesiastical Order, which receives daily Marks of this Prelate's Goodness and Credit, suffering him to enjoy his Mistresses Favors quietly; and, far from crying out upon his Court-Spirit, extolling his indefatigable Zeal for the Honor of the Church, and the Salvation of his Flock; which they'd ne'er allow, tho really so, did the Prelate thwart 'em in the least. These very Libellers, who read such fine Lectures to a Bishop who teases 'em, shall write you the Elogy of another Prelate, their Patron, very handsomly, tho the gallantest Person in the Kingdom. Let me assure you, Sir, you have those among you, who without any other Weapon than a Pen, become as guilty as they who revenge with Sword and Pistol; their injurious virulent way of writing, discovering a Spirit in them as opposite to the Gospel, and as full of Rancour, as in any Men in the World.

SECT. CLXXI. *Why Revenge and Avarice are so common.*

AND now I think on't, let's examine a little what makes Revenge so common among Christians. Is it that we are ignorant the Scripture forbids it as one of the sinfullest Actions? No; few Gospel Truths are so clearly exprest as those which concern Charity towards our Neighbor, and the Obligation we are under of forgiving Injurys. There's no point of Morality Preachers insist on more pathetically; and from the Cradle we are all taught a Prayer compos'd by **JESUS CHRIST**, and we repeat it hourly, as I may say, obliging

obliging us in exprefs Terms not to hope for the Pardon of our Sins, longer than we forbear Revenge. So that they who're only acquainted with the first Elements of the Christian Religion, can have no doubt of its being a heinous Sin. We must conclude then, the Reason of its being so universal, is its having universal Charms. The *Italians* find so many in it, that they say, in a horrible profane Raillery, God has reserv'd the delicious Morsel to himself. Other Nations don't run to such Extremes. But, generally speaking, all find a Pleasure in Revenge; Self-love, the inseparable Passion, still endeavoring to thrust as many below us as possible, and if this won't do, striving at least not to be below them. Now as the Offences we are about to revenge, represent us in our own Eyes inferior to the Offender, we find our Spirits eas'd of a great Burden, and transported with a spritely sense of Joy, as oft as by revenging our selves we recover Ground, and get the Superiority of our Enemy. Here undoubtedly lies the sweet of Revenge, and the true reason at the same time why so many are of a vindictive Spirit. And if with this it be consider'd there are a thousand ways of Revenge, which cost little, and don't expose to Actions at Law, we shall find the true Reason why so many in Fact revenge themselves.

Tho the Passions of Uncleanness and Lasciviousness are very general, yet we must allow 'em much less so than that we are speaking of: There are some Stages of Life wholly free from 'em; Children have no relish of 'em; old People for the most part losing these Appetites, unaccustom themselves by degrees. But no Age delivers from
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the Lust of Revenge; it reigns over Infants in the Cradle, and attends old Age to the Grave. Yet for all this I question whether Covetousness is not a more general Passion than Revenge. By Covetousness I understand, not only a Miser's fordid love of Money, but a Passion in general for Riches; whether the Person hoards, or whether he lavishes as fast as they come in. People generally imagine there's a mighty difference between the Prodigal and Covetous, but 'tis a mistake; none are more griping than your greatest Spendthrifts, as is evident from the Conduct of our Officers in the Revenue and Army. Their Feasts, their Buildings, their Entertainments for the Ladys, are made with the utmost Profusion; but their Exactions on the People discover the utmost Avarice: So that one may justly apply to 'em the Character of *Catilin*, *Alieni appetens sui profusus*. Taking Avarice then in this sense, I find it altogether as general as the Passion of Revenge; and inquiring into the Cause of this, I find 'tis not that we doubt its being a heinous Sin: for how shou'd such a Doubt arise in Christian Minds, after the express Prohibitions of the Decalogue, and constant Sermons grounded on the incontestable Authority of *St. Paul*, representing it as a degree of Idolatry, and a spiritual Monster of the most hideous kind? so that it must spring from Self-love alone, that inseparable Passion of our Nature: For this cursed Passion giving a relish for whatever flatters our Vanity, for whatever distinguishes from other Men, whatever procures the gratifying of our Lusts, whatever is thought a Bulwark against Distress, carrys us to pant ardently after Riches, as the Source of all these

Advantages. Something there is in the frame of Man, and the inward construction of the Machine, that every thought of his being rich, makes the Heart spring for joy. You may read us what fine Lectures you please on the Cares of the Covetous; it's certain they resent a sweeter Pleasure in the possession of their Hoards, than pain in the thoughts of losing 'em. The sight of their broad Gold gives 'em a high Opinion of their own parts, and inspires a secret Esteem, which makes amends * for Applauses the World sometimes denies. Now as nothing diverts a Man's Fancy like being the Object of his own Admiration, and having it in his power to tast all the Pleasures to be had for Mony; it follows, the possession of Riches is a Fund of Delights, at least he promises himself it will be. If you ask me, why almost all the World thirst after Revenge and Riches, both which the Gospel condemns, and only a few love Hunting, Dice, Sciences, &c. things permitted, or Vertue the only thing injoin'd: I answer, *Because according to the Mechanism of Man, or the union of his Soul and Body, there results a Pleasure from Riches and Revenge, rendring 'em agreeable to all the World; whereas only particular Fancys are taken with Hunting, Dice, Sciences, and Vertue.*

From this last set of Remarks I draw this Conclusion, That the Pleasure, and the cheapness of the Pleasure, is what makes some Vices more common than others, and not our Opi-

* *Populus me fibilat, at mihi plaudo,
Ipse domi simul ac nummos contempnor in arcâ.*

Hor. Sat. 1. l. 1.

nion upon the Turpitude of 'em in the degrees of more and less; and consequently, that Religion in this respect (for here's my main drift) † serves only to furnish Matter of fine Declamation from the Pulpit, or Explications of Duty, after which every one is absolutely govern'd by the impulse of his Taste for Pleasure. Whence it follows, that Atheists who only act by the same impulse, are not necessarily more corrupt than Idolaters, tho differing from Idolaters in the notion of Sin and Punishment, and wholly destitute of all Belief concerning these Points.

SECT. CLXXII. *Whether a Society of Atheists wou'd lay themselves under Rules of Honor and Civility.*

NOW we see how probable it is a Society of Atheists wou'd observe all Civil and Moral Dutys, as other Societys do, provided Crimes were severely punish'd, and Honor and Infamy annex'd to certain Points. As the Ignorance of a first Being, the Creator and Preserver of the World, wou'd not bereave the Members of this Society of a sense of Glory and Contempt, Reward and Punishment, or of all the Passions which reign in the rest of Men, nor wholly extinguish the Light of Reason; one shou'd find Persons among 'em of Integrity in common dealing, some who reliev'd the Poor, oppos'd Violence, were faithful to their Friends, despis'd Injurys, renounc'd sensual Pleasures, did no wrong; promp-

† This and all other Places of the same import, are to be understood with the limitation given before at Sect. 136, 164.

ted to these worthy Actions, either by a love of Praise inseparable from 'em, or a design of gaining Friends and Welwishers in case of a turn in their own Fortune. The Women wou'd set up for Vertue, as an infallible Pledg of the mens Love and Esteem. Crimes indeed of all kinds must happen in such a Society; but not frequenter than in a Society of Idolaters, because all the Principles which prompted the Pagans to Good or Evil, Rewards and Punishments, Glory and Disgrace, Complexion and Custom, take place in a Society of Atheists. And as to that sanctifying Grace which fills with the Love of God, and gives the Victory over evil Habits and Inclinations, Pagans were as destitute as they.

To be fully convinc'd that a People void of the Knowledg of God, might lay themselves under Rules of Honor, and observe 'em to the greatest Nicety, we need only consider there's a certain worldly Honor establish'd among Christians directly opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel. I'd fain know whence this Notion of Honor is borrow'd, which the World so idolizes as to sacrifice all to it. Is it because they know there's a God, a Gospel, a Resurrection, a Heaven and a Hell; that Christians think 'twou'd derogate from their Honor, to let an Affront go unrevenge'd, give the Wall, or have less Spirit and Ambition than their Equals? I suppose not. Run over all the Notions then of Civil Life among Christians, you shall hardly find two borrow'd from Religion; and when Actions once thought unseemly become genteel, 'tis not I, assure you Sir, that we have better consulted the Morality of the Gospel. The Ladys have bethought 'em

'em of late days, that 'twas more an Air of Quality to dress in Publick and before Company, to ride abroad in Hat and Feather, and gallop ten Miles a stretch in a Fox-chase, &c. and have so prevail'd, that 'tis no longer accounted a breach of Modesty. Is it Religion has chang'd our Ideas in this Point? Compare the Manners of several Nations professing the same Christian Religion; you shall find what's thought very indecent in one Country, is by no means so in another. The Ideas then of Decency and Civil Life among Christians, don't arise from Religion, Some I confess are universal, for there's no Christian Nation where Chastity in Women is thought scandalous. But to deal sincerely, it must be own'd, this Idea is earlier than either the Law or the Gospel, 'tis an Impression old as Human Nature; and I'll soon shew the Pagans did not borrow it from their Religion. Let's agree then, there are Notions of Honor in Mankind, which are the pure Work of Nature, that is, of a general Providence. Let's own this particularly with regard to that Honor of which our Swords-men are so jealous, tho so opposite to the Law of God. And how can we afterwards doubt, but Nature may produce among Atheists, where the knowledge of God do's not obstruct, the same Rules of Honor it produces among Christians?

SECT. CLXXIII. *That the Opinion of the Mortality of the Soul do's not extinguish the desire of immortalizing the Name.*

SOME perhaps may imagine that an Atheist, persuaded his Soul dies with the Body, is incapable of worthy Actions, from a desire of immortalizing his Name, which is so strong a Motive with other Minds. But this is a gross Mistake; because it's certain they who have done the greatest things to be applauded by Posterity, ne'er flatter'd themselves with the hopes of knowing in another World what shou'd be said of 'em in death. Besides, do our Hero's of the present Age, who run upon so many Dangers, and undergo such Fatigues to be mention'd in Story, imagine, that the Monuments rais'd to their Memory here, transmitting to latest Posterity their great and glorious Actions, shall give 'em the least pleasure in another State? Do they depend on a communication with this World in a future Life? And are not they rather persuaded, whether they enjoy the Felicities of Heaven, or suffer the Flames of Hell, all accounts of Mens admiring 'em wou'd be equally insignificant? The belief then of the Immortality of the Soul is not the only incentive to Glory; and consequently Atheists are capable of desiring eternal Renown. All that's solid in a love of Glory, is only the Person's pleasing Imagination in this Life, of his becoming an Object of Wonder for a long Series of Ages. When once he shifts this Scene for Eternity, he has something to think on beside his Reputation in this Life.

Id cineres & manes credis curare Sepultos?

I suppose you have heard how Mr. *de Castelnau*, being presented with the Marechal's Staff a little before he expir'd of his Wounds at the Siege of *Dunkirk* 1658. told his Friends, 'Twas a very pretty thing in France, but he was bound to a Country where 'twou'd be of no manner of use to him.

SECT. CLXXIV. *Examples shewing that Atheists have not been distinguish'd by a Corruption of Manners.*

BUT still they'l say, this is a Paradox indeed; A Vertuous Atheist! Why it's a Monster surpassing the utmost strain of Nature. I answer, an Atheist who lives soberly, is not more strange, than a Christian hurry'd to all manner of Excess. If we daily see Monsters of the last kind, why shou'd we think the others impossible?

But to offer something more solid, and put what I have advanc'd about the Manners of a Society of Atheists beyond a bare Conjecture, I observe, that those few among the Antients who made open Profession of Atheism, as *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Evemerus*, and some others, did not live in a state of Libertinism, to make the World cry out upon'em. I don't find they are accus'd of being as singular for the Disorders of their Life, as for the frightful Extravagances of their Understanding. On the contrary, I observe, their Sobriety appear'd so admirable to * *Clemens Alexandrinus*, that he

* In *Protreptic*.

thought himself oblig'd to demur to the Charge of Atheism against 'em. He pretends, their Penetration in discovering all the Errors of the Pagan Theology, was the whole ground of the Accusation, and that they were branded for Atheists, only because they despis'd the false Gods. He's mistaken; and I admire a Person of his Erudition shou'd be ignorant, that the Pagans carefully distinguish'd †† those who affirm'd the Existence of a God, those who doubted, those who deny'd it, those who ascrib'd the Government of the World to a Divine Providence, and those who thought fit to assign the Gods a Beatitude free from Care. The Opinion of those who deny'd the Existence of a God, was never confounded with the rest; the Name of Atheist was always appropriated to these; and they whom *Clemens Alexandrinus* wou'd vindicate, are constantly reckon'd of this Number. *Cicero**, *Plutarch*†, *Diogenes Laertius* ||, and many more, are too express in this point, to leave any room for evading their Testimony. *Socrates* was of that set of Philosophers who maintain'd the Unity of the Godhead, and therefore is never rank'd among the Atheists with *Theodorus* and *Diagoras*. Others pretended, that all the Pagan Divinities were reducible to one. *Lactantius* ** maintains, that the Unity of the Godhead was known to several Pagans, to *Orpheus*, *Virgil*, *Thales*, *Pythagoras*, *Anaxagoras*, *Antisthenes*, *Cleanthes*, *Anaximenes*, *Cicero*; and proves it from several

†† Cicero l. i. de natura Deorum. * L. i. de Nat. Deor.
† De Placit. Philos. || In vita Aristippi. ** Lib. i. de fals. relig. c. 5.

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authentick Passages in their Writings: yet these were never reproach'd with Atheism. *Clemens Alexandrinus* had no Reason then to doubt their being guilty of this Impiety, who are expressly and by name accus'd of it by the Pagans. And 'tis strange * *Muret* with all his fine Learning shou'd fall into the same Error. 'Tis certain, *Diagoras*, *Theodorus*, *Nicanor*, *Hippon*, *Evemerus*, believ'd no God; yet they were Men of so much Vertue ||, that a Father of the Church challenges 'em as his own, and magnifys the Excellency of true Religion by their Vertue.

It appears from some Passages of *Pliny*, that he did not believe a God; yet he was no voluptuous Liver, and never any one apply'd † himself more to all honest Occupations, or more becoming an illustrious *Roman*.

Epicurus, who deny'd a Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, liv'd as exemplarily as any of the antient Philosophers: And tho in process of time, his Sect lost its Reputation, yet 'tis certain, it always consisted of many Persons of Honor and Probity; and that they who dishonor'd it by their Vices, were not corrupted in his School. They were Persons wicked in Nature and Constitution, glad they cou'd say, in defence of their filthy Passions, that they follow'd the Maxims of one of the greatest Philosophers in the World; and imagining the Cloke of Philosophy gave 'em a right to laugh at the Scandals taken by the World.

* *Varian. l. 10. c. 17.* || *Σωφρόνως βεβιωκότας*, qui moderate & continenter vixerunt. *Clem. Alex. in Protrept.*
 † *Vide Plin. jun. Epist. 5. l. 3.*

They were not therefore rendred dissolute by embracing *Epicurus's* Doctrine, but embrac'd his misrepresented Doctrine because they were dissolute. Thus *Seneca* * speaks, tho of a Sect full of Animosity against the Name of *Epicurus*; and freely declares, he's perswaded this Philosopher's Pleasures were very sober, and very dry. *St. Jerom* † speaks advantageously of his Frugality, and confounds the Irregularitys of Christians by his Example.

The *Jews* had a Sect among 'em which openly deny'd the Immortality of the Soul, I mean the *Sadducees*. Yet it does not appear, that with so detestable an Opinion they led wickeder Lives than the other *Jews*; on the contrary, it's very probable they were more righteous than the *Pharisees*, who boasted so much of their observing the Law.

Mr. Balzac, in his *Christian Socrates*, relates the last Words of a Prince who liv'd and dy'd an Atheist, and gives him this Character: *That he was not void of moral Vertue, that his Communication was yea and nay, his Diet Tisan; and that he was perfectly regular as to the outward Appearance.*

The detestable *Vannini*, who was burnt for Atheism at *Tholouse* in 1619. was all along exact enough in his Conduct; and whoever had brought an Action against him for any other Crime except his Doctrine, had run a great risk of being convicted of Slander.

* Non ab Epicuro impulsu luxuriantur, sed vitiis dediti, luxuriam suam in Philosophiæ sinu abscondunt. *De vitâ beat.* c. 12.

† L. 2. contra Jovinian. c. 8.

In the || Reign of *Charles IX.* *An.* 1573. a Person was burnt at *Paris* for privately instilling atheistical Doctrines. He taught that preserving the Purity of one's Body was the only Divinity, and therefore was suppos'd never to have defil'd himself with Women. He had as many Shirts as Days in the Year, and sent 'em continually to *Flanders*, to be wash'd in some Fountain, famous for the clearness of its Water, and Virtue in whitening Linen. He had an Aversion to all Obscenity, whether of Words or Actions; and tho he persisted in his Blasphemy's with an extreme Obstinacy, yet he deliver'd himself at the Stake with a compos'd Air, and as little concern in his Looks, as one jesting with his Friends.

The Relation of Mr. *Rycaut*, * Secretary to the Earl of *Winchelsey*, the *English* Ambassador at *Constantinople*, has made too much noise not to reach your Ears: so that I shan't stand to entertain you with the Praises of this Author's Diligence in informing himself exactly of what he delivers, but only take notice, that after his mentioning, that the Atheists in *Turky* have form'd a regular Society, compos'd for the most part of *Cadis*, and Persons deeply read in the Arabick Books; he adds, the Members of this Sect have an extraordinary Friendship for one another, mutually performing all kind Offices, are civil, hospitable, and extreme obliging to all Strangers of their own Sentiment. Their Civilitys are carry'd a little too far indeed, seeing they provide their Guests with an Entertainment at night very unseemly, but no more than all the other *Turks* are guilty of. So that if

one compare the Lives of these Atheists with those of the Mahometans in every Article, we shall find either no difference at all, or the Advantage on the side of the former.

I shall not presume to rank the Chancellor *de l'Hopital* in the number of Atheists; I don't doubt he was a good Christian, but I may say, he was shrewdly suspected of Irreligion, tho nothing was more austere, nothing graver or more compos'd than his outward Appearance, nothing more exemplary than his Life. Mr. *de Beaucaire de Peguillon*, * Bishop of *Mets*, charges him openly with Atheism. His Testimony is somewhat suspicious indeed, on the account of his Dependance on the Cardinal of *Lorain*, whose Preceptor he was. But this however shews, that Men forget themselves, when they pronounce Atheism inseparable from a Depravation of Manners; since we find a Chancellor of *France* charg'd with Atheism, tho his Sobriety was conspicuous to all the World. 'Tis very strange, and extreme scandalous, that not only he, but all others distinguish'd by an Austerity of Life in the last Age, were look'd on as bad Catholicks, while they, who cou'd make proof of their sticking at no Debauchery, were sufficiently acquitted of any Inclination for the new Opinions; as in *Rome* of old, they † who were impeach'd of a Conspiracy a-

* *Homo quidem doctus, sed nullius Religionis aut ut verè dicam, ædæus. Comment. rerum Gallic. l. 28. n. 57.* † *Duos solos è notioribus veniã donatos constat, qui se quo facilius expertes culpæ ostenderent impudicos probaverant. Suet. in Domit. c. 10.* — *Cesoninus vitiis protectus est tanquam in illo foedissimo coetu passus muliebris. Tacit. Annal. l. 13. vid. Suet. in Nerone, c. 29.*

gainst the State, were immediately discharg'd, cou'd they prove themselves Pathicks and Prostitutes.

SECT. CLXXV. *That your Men of Pleasure don't trouble their Heads about religious Matters.*

I Don't know whether we mayn't justly apply to Religion what *Julius Cesar* answer'd those who advis'd him to beware of *Anthony* and *Dolabella*; *I ne'er suspect those plump jolly Beaux, I much more dread the pale meager Faces,* meaning *Brutus* and *Cassius*. Those Enemies of Religion, the Wits, I mean, who believe nothing; who give themselves the Title of *Bold Thinkers*; who find flaws in all Demonstrations of the Existence of a God, and improve every Difficulty against a Providence, are not, generally speaking, the most Voluptuous part of the World: He who spends the Day over a Bottle, and the Night at a Ball; dies for the Fair, and for the Brown; spreads every Snare for the Chastity of Women; endeavors to drown his Thoughts by Revelling, and prevent a disrelish of Pleasure by a variety of Objects; ne'er troubles his Head to examine whether *Mr. Descartes's* Demonstration of a God, and immaterial Substances, be valid, or his Answers to all the Objections against him satisfactory. He ne'er examines *Mr. Huet's Demonstratio Evangelica*, so full of Eloquence and Erudition, nor labors to elude any Arguments for the Truth of the Christian Religion. He breaks not his Brain with *Spinosa's* crabbed Doctrines, to prove the Universe a simple undivided Being, and Us so many Modifications of the Divinity. He even

even laughs at a Natural Philosopher, who applies himself to find the Causes of Phenomena.

** Let Rohault vainly break his Rest to prove
How, when the Whole was full, the Whole cou'd move.*

He has not leisure for so many things; nor if he had, wou'd he employ it on abstracted Reflections, insipid and incomprehensible to the Sensual. He trusts his good Fortune; holds to his Catechise; and perhaps has a secret Persuasion, that doubting nothing makes amends for a wicked Life, Faith being not only conducive to a present Peace of Mind, but profitable to Salvation: in the mean time he takes his swing. On the other hand; they whose Character's Incredulity and a Spirit of Scepticism, and who value themselves on rational Doubting, detest Taverns and Womens Conversation, are peevish, pale, meager, musing even at Meals on a Proposition in Algebra. So that instead of saying with *Cato* †, That among those who struck at the Libertys of *Rome*, *Cesar* alone proceeded in cold Blood; we must acknowledg, That among those who have conspir'd against the Unity of the Church, broach'd Heresys, endeavor'd to destroy Religion and the Belief of a God, there have been very few Drunkards or Debauchees. *Cicero* observing || that *Cesar* scratch'd his Head with the point of one Finger, comb'd, curl'd and kept his Hair in the nicest Order, judg'd him incapable of endangering the Liberty of the

* Mr. Des Preaux Epitre a Mr. de Guillerages. † Sueton. in Jul. c. 53. || Plutarch. in Jul. Caf.

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Commonwealth. He was mistaken; but we can never be, in judging that a person drown'd in sensual Pleasure, shall e'er broil or burn for Heresy or Atheism. Not that I suppose all, who are void of Religion, to be of an orderly Life: On the contrary, many of 'em are, no doubt, guilty of the foulest Crimes. But my meaning is, that all of this kind are not distinguish'd by their Vices; and this can't be justly deny'd me, because I have Experience and Fact of my side. Now from there being Atheists, who, morally speaking, have vertuous Inclinations, we may safely conclude Atheism is no necessary Cause of a wicked Life; and therefore is only so by Accident, or rather is the Cause of a Corruption of Manners, in those only whose Dispositions for Evil will render 'em corrupt without it.

SECT. CLXXVI. *That Man do's not regulate his Life by his Opinions.*

I'M sensible it's somewhat strange, a Man believing neither a Heaven nor Hell, shou'd yet lead a good moral Life. But still I'm led to the thought of Man's being that kind of Creature, who, with all his boasted Reason, never acts by the Principles of his Belief. Christians furnish Instances in abundance. *Cicero* has observ'd * of the Epicureans, that some of 'em were capable of Friendship, Men of Worth, whose Actions were squar'd, not by Rules of Lust or Voluptuousness, but by Principles of Reason. *They live*, says he, *better than they talk; whereas others talk better than*

* De Fin. l. 2.

they live. The same Remark has been made on the Conduct of the *Stoick* Philosophers. Their Principle was unavoidable Fate, from which God himself neither is, nor ever was exempt. This shou'd naturally prevent all means of exciting 'em to Action, put an end to Exhortation, Censure, Threats and Promises. Yet no Philosophers employ'd these means more than they; and their whole Conduct is an Argument they believ'd themselves Masters of their own Destiny. The *Turks* hold something of this Doctrine of the *Stoicks*, and stretch the Point of Predestination farther than any. Yet we see 'em fly from Danger like other Men; and I question whether they'l mount a Breach with as much intrepidity as the *French*, who believe no Predestination. What we are told of the Security of these Infidels, on an opinion of the Unchangeableness of their Fate, is all fable. They take prudential Measures like us, and punish particular Faults more severely. We see some Christians who deny Predestination; we see others who hold it. Some pretend, one may be assur'd of Salvation; that one never falls from Grace; that we are not sav'd by good Works; that there's no need of confessing our Sins save to God alone; that there's no such place as Purgatory. Others maintain quite the contrary. But notwithstanding this Opposition in their Tenets, both Partys govern themselves alike with regard to Manners. If there be any difference, it arises from the particular Genius of each Nation, and not from that of the Sect.

'Twere endless tracing Man in all his odd Variety and Caprice, which shews him not only the most ridiculous Animal in Nature, as Mr. Des

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Preaux has prov'd in one of his Satyrs, but a Monster more extravagant than the Centaurs, or the Chimera of the Poets. Which, by the way, is a convincing Argument, as Mr. *Pascal* observes, of the Truth of the Scripture-account concerning the Fall of Man; it being certain, that here alone we are to expect a full Reason of all the Contradictions which occur in our Kind. Yet this hinders not, but the Principle I have laid down may unfold the Riddle in part. For if it be true, that general Persuasions are not the Spring of our Actions; and that Temper, Custom, or some particular Passion determines, there may well happen a vast difference between Belief and Practice. Then 'tis as possible an Atheist may stint himself in some Pleasures for the sake of another, as an Idolater swear a false Oath. And consequently, that Voluptuousness, and all kind of Crimes, are not the inseparable Effects of Irreligion. Those only are, for which the Constitution or Fancy give a particular relish, provided the Dread of human Justice, Detriment, or Censure, interfere not with the Enjoyment. Whereby it's plain, a Pagan, with regard to Manners, is not a jot a better Man than an Atheist.

SECT. CLXXVII. *The Reason of our imagining Atheists extraordinary Wicked.*

BUT how then, you'll say, comes the World to fancy Atheists the most profligate Villains in Nature, Men of Blood, Enemys to all Order and Distinction, and Invaders of Civil Right? From hence, That they falsely imagine Man always acts by Principle; that is, according to his Persuasions

suasions in Religion : That they have known Men of no Religion, such as *Mahomet II.* for example, commit the horriblest Crimes ; not considering they had done the same, tho under the general sense of a Deity, as is evident in *Nero*, whom I instanc'd before, and *Bajazet* as outrageously wicked, as barbarous and cruel as the former Sultan : That they don't distinguish those Atheists who begin, from those who end in the disbelief of a God. Those, for the most part, are your false learn'd, who wou'd distinguish themselves by an insolent Reason, and the contempt of sensual Pleasure. These are Souls sunk in Voluptuousness, and guilty of the blackest Crimes ; who perceiving the Thoughts of Hell intrude sometimes on their Peace, and imagining 'twere their Interest there shou'd be no God, endeavor to persuade themselves there is none. One of our most Illustrious Prelates seems to be of opinion, that only this last sort ever arrive at a thorow Atheism. *We*, says he, *may affirm quite the contrary, of what an impious debauch'd Philosopher advanc'd, more from a vanity of being the Author of a witty Saying, than any real Conviction, That Fear had made the Deity ; and maintain, That Fear alone, tempts Men to disbelieve a God.* I don't think all our Atheists are of this Stamp ; I only say, there are some who take pains to make themselves so. Whether they gain their Point, or whether they are balk'd, they are undoubtedly the worst of Men : Yet not the worst merely as Atheists, but become Atheists by being the worst ; or if they can't arrive at Atheism, still they live as tho they did. When a Man's come to that pass, as to wish himself an Atheist, and make the last Efforts on Conscience, he's at the very

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very Crisis of Malice ; a higher degree is not incident to the human Soul : and unless God work Miracles to convert him, he sticks at no kind of Iniquity, altho possibly he mayn't obtain his full Wish. So that such a one is incomparably farther remov'd from the way of Salvation, than an Atheist bred and born, or a simple Unbeliever. Now as they who from mere Malice extinguish, or endeavor to extinguish the Knowledg of God, are the most notorious Monsters, and most resolv'd Sinners in the World, People fancy all Atheists indifferently the most flagitious Part of Mankind.

SECT. CLXXVIII. *Whether one may have Notions of Moral Vertue without the Belief of a God.*

WHAT confirms 'em in this Persuasion, is the difficulty of comprehending how a Man, who believes no God, can have any Notion of moral Honesty, insomuch that they look on him as one ripe for every Mischief which human Justice can't revenge. They are notoriously mistaken ; for it's well known the Epicureans perform'd many fair and worthy Actions, which might be omitted without the danger of Punishment, and sacrific'd Pleasure and Profit to pure Vertue. The antient Sages understood by the Dictates of mere Reason, that * we ought to do

* Satis enim nobis (si modo in Philosophia aliquid proficimus) persuasum esse debet, si omnes Deos, hominesque celare possemus, nihil tamen avarè, nihil injustè, nihil libidinosè, nihil incontinentè esse faciendum, Hinc ille Gyges, &c. Cic. l. 3. de Offic. vide Hor. l. 1. Ep. 17.

Good for the sake of doing Good; that Vertue was its own Reward; and that 'twas the Character of a wicked Man to forbear doing Ill from the Fear of Punishment.

Our Historians relate, that an Embassador from *St. Louis* to the Sultan of *Damascus*, asking a Woman in the Streets what she meant by carrying Fire about in one hand, and Water in another, was answer'd, She design'd to set Fire to Heaven, and extinguish the Flames of Hell, that Men might no longer worship the Divinity from mercenary Views, but purely for the Excellency of its Nature. To say nothing of the *Sadduces*, who made open Profession of God's Worship, tho they only expected a Reward in this life; don't we read that *Epicurus*, who deny'd a Providence, and the Immortality of the Soul, constantly honor'd the Gods? He compos'd Books of Devotion *, in which he spake with so much Fervor of Holiness and Piety, that one wou'd have thought 'em the Work of some Sovereign Pontiff. When 'twas objected, he might very well dispense with Worship, who believ'd the Gods did us neither Good nor Harm; he answer'd, The Excellency of their Nature was a sufficient Ground of Adoration †; and 'twas a mistaken Notion to think we ought not to pay 'em Honors, unless mov'd by a sense of Fear. || *Deliver'd from the Dread, and set free*

* Cic. de Nat. Deorum, l. 1. † Habet venerationem justam quicquid excellit. *Cicer. de Nat. Deor. l. 1.* || His terroribus ab Epicuro soluti, & in libertatem vindicati, nec metuimus eos quos intelligimus, nec sibi fingere ullam molestiam, nec alteri quærere, & piè sanctèque colimus naturam excellentem atque præstantem. *Cic. ibid.*

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by Epicurus, we are in no pain from the Divinity; because we know it's provok'd at nothing, it designs us no mischief; yet we render a pious and holy Worship to this Being full of Majesty and Excellence. Whether there were more Sincerity or Prudence in these fine Maxims, is what I won't undertake to decide. But it can't be deny'd, a Man who speaks thus, has an Idea of moral Honesty, and conceives that a disinterested Veneration for things excellent in themselves, is the Duty of a reasonable Nature: This Inference * *Seneca* draws from these Doctrines of *Epicurus*. It's plain then, Reason, without the assistance of Religion, conceives an Idea of that Piety so much boasted of in the Fathers; by which one loves God, and obeys his Will, purely on the account of his infinite Perfection. This convinces me, that Reason, without the Knowledg of God, may sometimes distinguish things intrinsically honest; the practice of which is right and praise-worthy, not only on account of its Profitableness, but Conformity to right Reason.

Some may possibly be brutish enough not to see that a grateful Sense of Benefits is honestest than Ingratitude; but I see no indispensable Necessity, that those who know no God, shou'd not know there's an intrinsical Honesty in Gratitude. For tho God reveals not himself fully to an Atheist, yet he do's not cease acting on his Spirit, and up-

* *Cur colis? propter Majestatem inquis ejus eximiam, singularémque Naturam. Ut concedam tibi, namque hoc facis, nullâ spe, nullo pretio inductus. Est aliquid per se expetendum, cuius te ipsa dignitas ducit. Id est honestum. De Benef. lib. 4. cap. 18.*

holding that Reason and Understanding by which all Men comprehend the Truth of the first Principles of Morality and Metaphysics.

SECT. CLXXIX. *That an Atheist may thirst after Praise and Glory.*

IT's certain withal, that a Man wholly destitute of Religion, may be deeply touch'd with a Sense of Honor, and thirst after worldly Praise and Glory. If then such a one happen to live in a Country where Knavery and Ingratitude expose to contempt, and where Vertue and a generous Temper are admir'd; ne'er question his professing himself a Man of Honor, and even capable of discharging a Trust, tho not to be compel'd to it by Course of Law. The Fear of passing for a Cheat and a Villain, will prevail o'er his Love of Mony: and as there are Men who run thro abundance of Trouble and Hazard to revenge an Affront receiv'd in the presence of a few, and which they'd put up with all their hearts, but for fear of incurring the contempt of their Acquaintance; so in spite of the Temptation, I believe a Man void of Religion may be capable of restoring a thing committed to his Trust, tho 'twere impossible to convict him legally of a Fraud, because he knows his Honesty will gain him the good Word of the Town, and his Breach of Trust be thrown in his dish, at least bring him under a suspicion, which shall effectually prevent his passing for an honest Man in Peoples Thoughts. For 'tis the inward Esteem of Men we aspire after most.

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most. The Words and outward Behavior expressing this Esteem, are no farther valuable than as they are taken for real Indications of the Heart. A Machine's approaching us with the profoundest Reverence, and pronouncing the finest Compliment, cou'd give no good Opinion of our selves, as known not to proceed from another's inward Opinion of our Merit. Therefore, I say, a Man may sacrifice his Avarice to his Vanity, where he only apprehends a suspicion of his Breach of Trust. And tho intirely above suspicion, yet might he resolve to quit his Prize, for fear of betraying himself in his Sleep, or in a raving Fever; for such Examples have been: And *Lucretius* * uses it as a Motive to persuade Men, void of Religion, to the practice of Vertue and Justice.

I pass over *Cardan's* Remark, That they who believe the Soul dies with the Body, are by Principle honestest than others; because a good Name is more their Interest: He compares 'em to Usurers, who to give a credit to their Calling, are the punctuallest Men alive to what they promise, and to the Letter of the Promise.

* Quippe ubi se multi per somnia sæpe loquentes,
Aut morbo delirantes, protraxe ferantur,
Et celata diu in medium peccata dedisse.

SECT. CLXXX. *The Example of Lucretia, and such as she, an evident Proof that Religion was not the Ground of the Pagans Notion of Honor.*

BUT what wou'd you say, Sir, shou'd I prove that the Love of Glory, which so strongly possess'd the Pagans, very often depended not in the least on the Ideas borrow'd from Religion? If I prove this Point, you must allow, This desire of Glory proceeded from a Principle altogether distinct from Religion, and consequently might obtain in the World, tho there were no Religion at all: Mark how I prove it.

'Tis incontestable, that for the three or four first Ages of *Rome*, the Modesty, Frugality, and Chastity of the Women, were much more conspicuous than those Virtues have been among Christians for a thousand years past. These were accounted the chief Ornaments of the Sex; the Women, who excel'd in these Qualities, were ador'd; those void of 'em were despis'd. The first * Magistrate of *Rome*, whose Authority came little short of absolute Power, employ'd his Vows and Promises in vain to satisfy his Passion for the Daughter of an ordinary Citizen. He found her Proof against all Temptation; and when he betook himself to indirect Ways, and the Authority his high Station gave him †, the Virgin's Father chose to cut her

* Appius Claudius Decemvir, An. Rom. 304. † Appius amore ardens pretio ac spe pellicere adortus, postquam omnia pudore septa animadverterat, ad crudelem superbamque vim animum convertit. *Liv. Dec. 1. l. 3.*

in pieces, rather than see her ravish'd by the Tyrant. You'll allow the Sense of Honor must run very high to carry People to such Extremitys; and that *Lucretia*, who'd neither yield to the dishonest Embraces of a Prince, her Sovereign's Son, nor survive the Affront, must have an inconceivable Passion for the Character of a vertuous Woman.

This being premis'd, I affirm, The *Roman* Women cou'd not be inspir'd with this exceeding Nicety of Honor by the Religion in vogue; because to produce such an Effect, it ought to inculcate, that Impurity was displeasing to the Gods. But far from this, it taught quite the contrary, that the Gods themselves were extremely debauch'd. So that had the *Roman* Men and Women follow'd the Instincts of their Religion, they had reason'd like him * in the Play, who seeing a Picture of *Jupiter* chang'd into a Golden Shower to enjoy his Mistress, crys out, *As little a Fellow as I am, I shou'd make a scruple of doing what the greatest of our Gods is not asham'd of.* Who for the future can doubt that Men form Ideas of Honor and Glory independent of Religion; since, as we have seen already, they on one hand judg some things honest, which are in reality otherwise, and which Religion condemns; and on the other hand, judg certain things dishonest, which are so in effect, tho their Religion tend to represent 'em otherwise?

If this Reflection mayn't be thought convincing, here's another to my purpose that's incontestable. Had *Lucretia* valu'd Chastity from a Principle of

* Ter. Eunuch. Act. 3. Sc. 5.

Religion, or, which is much the same, had valu'd it in Obedience to God, she ne'er had yielded to the Importunities of *Sextus*, but chose to sacrifice her Reputation, rather than defile her self by Adultery. But this was not her choice. She bravely held out against all the Prince's Attacks, even when he threaten'd her Life. But when he threaten'd her Reputation with eternal Infamy, she fairly surrendred, and then slew her self. An evident Argument, she valu'd nothing in the Vertue but the Glory which attends it, without the least regard to any Obedience due to the Gods; for they who act from Religion, are content to submit to the Reproach of the World rather than the Guilt of a Crime. We must therefore allow, *Lucretia's* Religion had no part in her Chastity, and that she had been exactly what she was in this respect, tho she ne'er had heard there was a God.

You'll tell me, perhaps, I take a deal of needless pains, by indavouring to establish what none contests, that Atheism destroys not the desire of Praise. What will you have me do? Will you have me prove that Atheism wou'd not prevent mens annexing the Idea of Seemly, to what's really Unseemly? that in a Society of Atheists, for example, the Glory of Woman-kind wou'd ne'er be plac'd in Chastity? If this be all, there's no occasion for new Arguments; it suffices, that in *Rome* a Woman's Honor was made to consist in Chastity, tho the Religion of the Place did naturally lead to consider Incest and Adultery as Practices Divine. If then, contrary to the Instincts of Religion, it became a standing Maxim among the Pagans, that Chastity and Modesty were honorable
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in Women, by a much stronger reason they'l be thought so among those who have no Religion at all. And it being as natural for Men to set a Value on things in proportion to what they cost, as to be pleas'd when they think themselves distinguish'd, People had soon discover'd by a bare instinct of Nature, that 'tis the Interest and Glory of Womankind not to lavish their Favors; which alone naturally and insensibly brings things about to that uniform state in which we find 'em throughout almost all the Commonwealths of the World.

SECT. CLXXXI. *A new Observation, shewing that Men don't walk according to their Principles.*

ON what side soever we turn our Thoughts, it can't be deny'd that Man acts continually against Principle: For if it's pretended, the antient Idolaters had fix'd Notions of their Divinitys rewarding Vertue and punishing Vice; I ask, How came these Idolaters to be so very wicked? If it be said, they were wicked because their detestable Theology represented their Gods as guilty of a thousand Crimes; I ask, How come there so many Vertuous among the Pagans, and so many Profligates among Christians, with whom this Reason do's not hold? There's no other Answer, than owning that the true Spring of Human Actions is something very distinct from Religion. Which yet hinders not Religion's falling frequently into the Scale, and casting it powerfully o' that side to which Constitution inclines. For example, a Cholerick Christian is on a sudden red hot with

with Zeal against those of a different Sect. Religion, say they, is what moves the Man: No, say rather, it's natural Emulation, and the pleasure we all take in out-doing our Concurrents, and revenging our selves on those who arraign our Conduct.

The Author of *a Treatise against Atheists, Deists, and Modern Pyrrhonians*, printed in 1677. has said a thousand fine things, and with a world of Eloquence: he has not forgot this Thought among the rest, * *That had Atheism, or Deism prevail'd in the first Ages, the World, far from subsisting a whole Eternity under such an Opinion, had been destroy'd long ago.* To prove this he introduces a feign'd † Dialogue between two Atheists, in which we see that Reason, Laws Natural and Civil, Justice and Vertue are so many words without a meaning. This he proves very judiciously; but not having consider'd one material Point, which I pretend to have demonstrated, to wit, That Men ne'er act by Principle, we may with good ground alledg he has prov'd nothing in this place. What he makes one of the Partys to the Dialogue say, can ne'er be call'd in question by sound Divines; *That || the Pagans had all idoliz'd the predominant Passion of their Soul, and form'd all their Vertues and Felicities by this Standard: That the Phantom of Glory supported 'em under the sharpest Sufferings, and urg'd 'em to Efforts, which put their Example above imitation: That the Horrors they gave Spectators, were an unspeakable Pleasure, which made 'em amends for all their Anguish: That Manlius Torquatus,*

* Ch. 11. p. 238. † Ch. 12. || P. 264.

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that idolatrous worshipper of Glory and Country, sacrific'd his Son to these Idols.

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Their Trophys over vanquish'd Nature raise.

That Alexander had naturally the highest Ferment in his Blood and Spirits, an open Heart, a large and diffusive Soul; which meeting in one Person, becomes the Foundation of what we call Generosity. That Titus had a natural Horror to Blood and Cruelty, found the greatest Charms in the love of the People, and form'd his Merit and Goodness on this principle of Self-love: That Epicurus was a Slave to the Pleasures of Sense, and plac'd his Felicity in 'em: That Seneca was perhaps less affected with these Pleasures, and judg'd Vertue consisted in governing Nature: That Cato was cold and phlegmatick, and extracted his Wisdom from this Phlegm. Isn't this what I have so often said, That the Pagans only follow'd the bias of natural Temper, and their tast for one particular kind of Glory? And since in driving with this Wind, they sometimes kept the true course of Vertue, what ground is there to imagine Atheists mayn't make the same Port?

Because, perhaps, they aspire but faintly to Glory? But what cou'd outdo * Spinoza's Vanity a little before his Death? The Account is of a fresh date, and I have it from a good hand. He was the rankest Atheist that e'er liv'd, and so bewitch'd to certain Principles of Philosophy, that to meditate on 'em with greater success, he betook himself to a profound Retreat, renouncing

* He dy'd at the Hague, Feb. 21. 1677.

all the Pleasures and Vanities of the World, and intirely occupy'd in his abstruse Reasonings. When he found himself near his end, he sent for his Landlady, and beg'd her to let no Clergyman come near him in that condition. The reason of this Caution, as we are inform'd by his Friends, was, lest any Expressions shou'd drop from him in the heat of Dispute, or decays of his Understanding, which might be made use of against his Principles; that is, lest it shou'd be reported, his Conscience awakening at the sight of Death, had made him renounce his Principles, and bely his former Conduct. Is it possible to conceive a more ridiculous and extravagant Vanity, or a more senseless Passion for the false Idea one forms of Constancy? We shall see more Examples of this kind.

SECT. CLXXXII. *Atheism's having its Martyrs, is an infallible Sign it do's not exclude the Ideas of Glory and Honor. A Reflection on the Conduct of Vannini.*

WHEN I consider Atheism has had its Martyrs, I can no longer doubt that Atheists have an Idea of what's Honest, which has more power over 'em than the Profitable or Pleasant. What else shou'd bewitch *Vannini* so undiscreeetly to broach his Doctrines before those who might drag him to Justice? Had he only study'd his private Interest, he'd have enjoy'd his own Thoughts quietly, without troubling himself to make Profelites. 'Tis plain therefore he was very ambitious, and this either to make himself the Head of a Party, or to deliver Men from a Yoke, which in his Opin-

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nion hinder'd their taking a full swing of Pleasure. If he design'd to make himself the Head of a Party, 'tis an Argument he look'd not on bodily Pleasure, or Riches, as his chief Good, but aim'd intirely at Glory. If he meant to deliver Men from the fears of Hell, with which he believ'd they vainly disquieted themselves, 'tis a sign he thought himself oblig'd to seek his Neighbor's Good, and judg'd it an honest part to be serviceable to Human-kind, not to his prejudice only, but even to the hazard of his Life: For *Vannini* cou'd not be ignorant that an Atheist who seeks his Profit, may find his Account much better among honest Devotes, than among Sharpers and Villains; the former supplants no body by Cabal and Intrigue, and far from over-reaching, or coveting his Neighbor's Goods, will rather part with his Right than contend with one he sees resolv'd to forswear himself; whereas the latter is generally the Aggressor in Fraud and Perjury, and all the villanous Ways of blasting his Competitor's Projects. So that it's the Interest of an Atheist, who designs to make his Fortune, there were none but good Men in the World; and *Vannini* mistook his Measures, if he propos'd by the establishing Atheism to begin a Scramble. He ought rather to have contributed to make all Mankind Devotes. Besides, he knew 'twas Death to propagate Atheism: so that by endeavoring to infuse his Impiety, he risk'd all the Advantages to be made of a good Conscience in others, and his Life into the bargain. A false Idea therefore of Generosity must induce him to sacrifice all to his Neighbor's Good.

But how comes it he did not deceive his Judges, and chuse to die in the sharpest Torments, rather than make a Recantation, which on his Principles wou'd do no prejudice in another World? Why did he not pretend his Eyes were open'd, and renounce his Impiety, seeing he believ'd not Hypocrisy forbad by any Supreme Power? We must allow on the whole, that either he'd do something extraordinary merely to be talk'd of, like that obscure Wretch who burnt *Diana's* Temple; or conceiv'd such Notions of Honor, as made him judg it a meanness unworthy of Human-kind, to dissemble his Sentiments out of a fear of Death. It can't be deny'd then, that Reason, without the express Knowledg of a God, may carry Men to notions of Honesty, sometimes just, and sometimes misunderstood: And in either case the Example of *Vannini* is an incontestable Argument of what I have so often advanc'd, that Men never act according to their Opinions. For had this Fool for one acted thus, he had left every one to his own Belief; or rather wish'd all the World, except himself, a parcel of Devotes, as being the fittest Tools for a Hypocrite to work by. What was't to him, if the true Christian deny'd himself the Pleasures of this Life? If touch'd with pity for him, he forsakes his Principles, which oblige to no concern for another: Besides his being grossly mistaken here, for no Pleasures of Sin are comparable to the Ravishments a devout Soul injoyse even in this Life. And for the common sort of Christians, his Pity was needless, because they divert themselves as much as if they had no Religion at all. After having preposterously discover'd his wicked Heart, he
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thou'd at least have sworn himself off, renounc'd his Errors, and offer'd to sign all the Articles of Faith with his Blood. Instead of this he stands it out, from a ridiculous Point of Honor, and stiffens under the Torments. Which shews he was capable, with the same degree of Obstinacy, to lay down his Life for Atheism, tho firmly persuaded of the Being of a God.

To this Example of *Vannini* we may join that of one * *Mahomet Effendi*, executed at *Constantinople* not long ago for having advanc'd some Notions against the Existence of a God. He might have sav'd his Life by confessing his Error, and renouncing it for the future; but chose to persist in his Blasphemys, saying, *Tho he had no Reward to expect, the love of Truth constrain'd him to suffer Martyrdom in its defence.* A Man must needs have an Idea of Honesty who talks at this rate; and if he carry his Obstinacy so far as to die for Atheism, his Passion for Martyrdom shall be capable of exposing him to the same Torments, tho in reality no Atheist.

SECT. CLXXXIII. *A Review of the Objection drawn from the Difficulty of converting an Atheist.*

I Desire no other Answer to those who say, Atheism being the most incorrigible disposition of Mind, is necessarily worse than Idolatry. An Idolater, say they, whom you endeavour to bring over to the true Religion, is agreed in a great many Points. You lose no time with him

* *Sir Paul Rycaut, l. 2. ch. 12.*

in proving a God; whereas the Atheist sets out here, and such is his Obstinacy, that one grows old in wrangling with him e'er this single Article is clear'd. For which reason, *Origen* laboring in the Conversion of two Pagan young Gentlemen, one of 'em afterwards *St. Gregory Thaumaturgus*, † allow'd 'em to read all the Philosophers and Poets except those tending to Atheism; judging it infinitely more dangerous, being accusom'd to hear there was no God, than to be acquainted with the different Opinions of the Philosophers concerning the Gods, whose Worship, the more extravagant it was, the likelier to render Men susceptible of the true Religion.

I intreat those who reason at this rate to consider,

I. That for one Atheist who persists to Death in his Impiety, there are a million of Idolaters in the same Bond of Obstinacy.

II. That the Perverseness of this small Number of Atheists proceeds not from their Atheism; for according to the Remark I have already made, they ought by their Principles to comply with the Religion of the Country: And not doing this, we must conclude, they are obstinate from natural Temper, and possess with a furious ambition of distinguishing themselves by ways extraordinary; a Disposition which may make one, persuaded of Religion, stand Fire and Fagot in defence even of Atheism. This being the Case, had *Vannini* been an Idolater, a Jew, or Mahometan, he had been at least as ill dispos'd for the reception of the true Religion, as the most obstinate Atheist.

† See the *Life of Tertullian* and that of *Origen*, by *Mr. de la Motte*, p. 543.

SECT. CLXXXIV. *Whence arises the difficulty of believing.*

III. **B**ESIDES, I'd have People attentively consider whence the Difficulty of converting Men to the Gospel proceeds. Those for the most part who reason on this Subject, seem persuaded, that the Difficulty arises not from Mens being requir'd to believe incomprehensible Mysteries, but from being injoin'd to renounce their Lusts and Passions. Thus People generally speak of this Matter.

Were no more requir'd to the being a Christian, than saying in one's Heart, *I believe what's told me of the Mystery of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and all other Articles the Church will have me believe, without obliging me to comprehend*; the Profession of the Gospel cou'd deter none: every one wou'd undertake to believe whate'er was propos'd, provided he were not requir'd to crack his Brain, or live by any other Rule than Fancy. Not that Believing is so easy as some are apt to imagine; but that we take it for granted nothing's easier, ne'er reflecting on the Nature of the thing. *Some impose on the World, * and wou'd be thought to believe what they really don't; but much the greater number impose on themselves, not considering nor thorowly apprehending what it is to believe.* Be it how it will, every one judges himself capable of professing Christianity, when he imagines that to be a Believer, 'tis sufficient in a careless way to signify he's possess'd of *that speculative † Faith concerning the Mysteries which*

* Montagne's *Essays*, l. 2. c. 12.

† Rapin *Foi de dern. Siecles*. p. 115.

costs nothing, and that superficial Faith which rests in the bare Understanding. But when told, that to believe the Gospel as he ought, 'tis necessary to mortify his Lusts, to love his Enemies, to bear Injuriys and Contempt with chearfulness; in a word, to strive against the Torrent of sensual Inclination: then Nature and Reason revolt in Consort, the Man will hear no more of the Christian Religion.

Reason, which just before was ready to take the Veil of implicit Faith, accusom'd as she was to be reserv'd even as to the Credulity of Idolaters, acquiescing in Doctrines not only more incomprehensible than our Mysterys, but also fraught with Absurditys, Farce, and staring Contradictions: Reason, I say, will no longer hear of believing things she can't comprehend. This is downright industrious Illusion, or a study'd Pretence to conceal the true Cause of our Unbelief. We dare not avow, that the Reason why the Gospel do's not sit easy, is, because it enjoins us to live virtuously; we dare not, I say, avow this, tho this is all the Grievance. So some blind Excuse is trump'd up, and we set our selves to dispute against the speculative Articles. The Heart, determin'd ne'er to yield, makes the Understanding, its old Bubble, take up Arms in its defence. * *St. Chrysostom's* inimitable on this Point, and 'tis from him we take this Maxim, *That the † Reason why we believe not a Divine Revelation, is our unwillingness to live up to it.* If this Reflection be right, it fol-

* *In I ad Corinth. c. 3.* † *Τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ταῖς ἐντολαῖς ἐκ οὗ πρὸς τὴν ἐκπλήρωσιν ἐκλείνεται τῶν ἐντολῶν γίνεται.* Idem ad Demetrium.

lows, that Idolaters, however inur'd to the belief of things incomprehensible, are no better dispos'd for Conversion than Atheists; because that Resistance, which the Heart makes against the Holy Spirit, springs intirely from the Corruption of natural Temper, the Unruliness of the Passions, an Inclination to Sensuality, Qualitys all prevailing no less in Idolaters than Atheists. 'Tis a Mistake then to fancy the worst is over, when those we'd convert to the Gospel are previously persuaded of the Existence of a God; for all the great Obstacles are still in the way.

As to the alledg'd Authority of *Origen*, I'll presume to say, his Reasoning at best can pass only for probable. It can't be deny'd there's something plausible in't, when consider'd in one Import: but take it by another handle, it loses much of its Force. In effect, *Mr. de Condom*, who has so much Justness of Thought, and so much Soundness of Judgment, makes no scruple of reasoning in direct opposition to *Origen*, seeing he supposes Idolatry hard to be destroy'd, merely because extravagant. *Idolatry*, says he, * *appears as Weakness it self, we can scarce conceive the Necessity of such powerful Means to destroy it. But quite contrary, its Extravagance shews the difficulty of the Conquest; and its Contradiction to good Sense, how much this Principle was deprav'd.* I don't suppose this Prelate design'd a Parallel between Idolatry and Atheism; but 'tis plain, his Argument to prove Idolatry hard to be destroy'd, proves it harder than destroying Atheism. *All the Senses*, says he, † *all the Passions, every Interest struggled for Idolatry.* 'Twas a Reli-

* *Disc. sur l'Hist. univers. 2 Part. ch. 12.*

† *Ibid.*

gion contriv'd for Pleasure; the Diversions, Games, Spectacles, and Licentiousness it self, made a part in the Divine Worship. Their Feasts were so many Amusements; nor was native Modesty laid aside in any Interval of human Life, so much as in the Celebration of their religious Mysterys. How shou'd Minds so deprav'd be reconcil'd to a Religion, holy, chaste, severe, opposite to Sense, and intirely reaching forth to things invisible? Then he shews how powerfully Interest, that is, the Profits and Pomp of the Pagan Religion, the excessive prejudice for Antiquity, and Reasons of State, conspir'd to the Support of Idolatry. Now who sees not that these mighty Springs have no room to play in a Society of Atheists?

We shall see anon whether any other Cause may be assign'd for the Difficulty of converting Men to God, beside that mention'd in the Entrance of this Article.

SECT. CLXXXV. *Reflections on the Conduct of JESUS CHRIST towards the Pharisees and Sadduces.*

IT looks as if our Lord JESUS CHRIST wou'd signify by his Behavior towards the Pharisees and Sadduces, that the main Obstacle to our Conversion lies in an ill Disposition of Heart. The Pharisees were much more Orthodox than the Sadduces. They believ'd all the Scriptures of the Old Testament. They shew'd an extraordinary Zeal for the Law of God; nor did they think its Observation sufficient without the Observance of several Traditions, and Customs, and unwritten Ceremonys. The Sadduces made much shorter work, retrench'd a thousand things they

judg'd

judg'd superfluous, and confin'd their Faith to the five Books of *Moses*, and the believing God a Being of infinite Perfection; but farther, believ'd neither Spirits, nor the Immortality of the Soul, nor Resurrection of the Body. These are Doctrines of the last Impiety; yet the *Jewish* High Priest and *Sanhedrim* never proceeded against the Sadduces, nor cut 'em off from the Communion of the *Jewish* Church; which they had infallibly done, had this Sect been guilty of Idolatry.

SECT. CLXXXVI. *Of the Jews Aversion to Idolatry.*

IN effect, the dreadful Punishments God had inflicted on the *Jews* for their Idolatrys, had imprinted so strong a horror for this Sin, that they scarce cou'd forbear rising in Arms against the fierce Tyrant *Herod*, on his ordering a Temple to be built to *Augustus* in *Judea*. The same Tyrant having set up a Golden Eagle on the great Gate of the Temple, had the Mortification, not long before his Death, to see it cut down in open Day by a Body of the young Men * of *Jerusalem*, at the Instigation of some Doctors of the Law. *Pilate* having soon after order'd the Emperor's Images to be brought into the City by Night, the *Jews* ran immediately in a Tumult to *Cesarea*, humbly beseeching him to take 'em away; which at last they obtain'd, after waiting five Days and five Nights successively at his Palace-Gate, in the Posture of Supplicants, offering their Throats to the Soldiers naked Swords, to whom *Pilate* threat-

* Joseph. Ant. Jud. lib. 17. cap. 8. l. 18. c. 4. & 11.

ned to deliver 'em, unless they consented to admit the Emperor's Images. They acted the same part not long after, protesting to the Pretor *Petronius* with incredible Constancy, they'd sooner be cut in pieces than suffer *Caligula's* Statue to be set up in the Temple. They had before prevail'd by their Prayers, not, as an illustrious Prelate * relates, that the Troops under the Command of *Vitellius* shou'd march thro *Judea* without their Ensigns, but that they shou'd take another Rout, for fear of shocking the Jewish Religion, which suffer'd no Object of Idolatry within the Borders of the holy Land.

They thought the Presence of an Idolater profan'd the Holiness of their Mysterys, and cou'd not bear a Pagan's appearing at their Divine Service. Their Scruples went so far, that they made it a Sin to sit down in the shade of a Tree where any Idol had ever stood, or pass under it when they cou'd take another way; and if there was no avoiding it, they were to pass running. This the learned † *Maimonides* informs us, with many more Particulars of like Force. It's evident from these Remarks, that the *Jews*, who had once the true Religion, and were Depositarys of the Will of God, accounted Idolatry a Crime more abominable than that Heresy which denys a future State. However, this is not what I chiefly aim at; my Design is to shew, our Saviour exprest a greater Indignation against the Pharisees than against the Sadduces. 'Tis the Pharisee he attacks on every Quarter; at these he points his sharpest Cen-

* Mr. de Condom, Discours. sur l'Hist. ex Josepho l. 18. c. 7.

† Lib. de Idolol. c. 7. Sect. 16.

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tures, these he endeavors to discredit; and why? because tho their Principles were more Orthodox, their Heart was more leven'd with Pride and Hypocrisy, which indispos'd 'em more than others for the Reception of the Gospel.

SECT. CLXXXVII. *Whether there be any other Cause of Incredulity beside an Inclination to Vice.*

BUT all who reason on the Causes of the Difficulty in converting Men to the Gospel, don't universally affirm, they arise from an ill Disposition of Heart only. They think it possible the Difficulty may sometimes proceed from an involuntary Darknes of the Soul; and that as there are Objects we can't perceive with the naked sight, tho desir'd ever so much, so there are Truths which ne'er appear such to our Understanding, even where there's a good Will and Endeavor to apprehend 'em. Let People say what they please, our Facultys never act, unless the Object bear a just proportion to 'em. If the Object of Sight be too minute, or too distant, or in the dark, we may pray long enough to see 'em, but rest satisfy'd we never shall, and yet have good Eyes too. On the other hand, if one's born purblind, we may hold him an Object at a just distance for a good Organ, and yet he ne'er discern it. And who has inform'd us, that the Objects of the Understanding don't require the same proportion to its Facultys, in order to be perceiv'd? Where is't reveal'd, that a good Will to believe 'em true, is sufficient to make their Truth evident? Who has told us, that the interior Light of the Soul is always clear enough to perceive all presenting

senting Objects at any distance, or under any kind of Veil? For my part, without denying that many wilfully blind themselves, I stand by what I said before *, that 'tis an incommunicable Divine Prerogative to know who are maliciously blind to the Mysterys of Faith. And as there are Understandings which see more Force in an Objection than in the Answer, tho the latter is more solid, and tho they are no way prejudic'd to either side; so others may give into Reasons of lesser Force, without being led by the Motions of any inordinate Passion.

The Philosophy of this Age proves in a most convincing manner, that the Soul's distinct from the Body, and consequently immortal; yet how many are there who can't comprehend the force of its Demonstrations? Don't tell me, they are Persons who wish the Soul extinguish'd with the Body. For, quite contrary, they are such as ardently desire its Eternity. I appeal to *Cicero* †, who assures us, he wishes in the first place, that the Soul were immortal; and in the next place, if not so, that he were however persuaded it was. He adds, while he's reading over *Plato's* Discourse on the Soul, he thinks himself convinc'd by his Arguments; but as soon as he lays the Book by, and reflects a little, all his fine Persuasion vanishes. Next I appeal to *Seneca* ||, who tells us, *He took a*

* *Señt.* 160. † *Me vero id delectat, idque primum ita esse, deinde etiamsi non sit, mihi tamen persuaderi velim. Tuscul. 1.* || *Juvabat de æternitate animarum quærere, imo mehercule credere. Credebam enim facile opinionibus magnorum virorum, rem gratissimam promittentium magis quam probantium. Dabam me spei tantæ. Epist. 102.*

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Pleasure in reasoning on the Immortality of the Soul, or rather in believing it; he readily entertain'd the Opinions of several great Men, who promis'd rather than prov'd this agreeable Point. I gave, says he, in to the mighty Hopes.

Here are two of the finest Wits of Antiquity doing their utmost to believe the Immortality of the Soul, and yet far from being thorowly convinc'd. Some on the other hand, according to the Remark from *Minutius Felix* cited * before, wish the Soul extinguish'd with the Body, but can't bring themselves to believe it. We see thousands daily in Distraction, that they can't doubt of a hundred things they wish they had never known, and vainly striving to shut their Eyes to the Merits of an Enemy. 'Tis not true then, that our Passions are always the Rule of our Opinions. And 'tis false, that whenever we don't clearly perceive an important religious Truth, we are under the Power of some secret Passion, whose Interest it is to keep us in the dark.

But 'tis of no great Consequence to my present Argument, whether Men resist the Gospel, because their Understandings are cover'd with Clouds rising from a corrupt Heart, or because bury'd in an Abyss of involuntary Prejudices; for which way soever we explain it, still I have a right to maintain, that Atheists are not harder to be converted than Idolaters. Will you have it, that Men resist the Gospel, because it enjoins the subduing their Passions? I assert, and think I have prov'd, that Idolaters are as great Slaves to their Passions as Atheists. Or will you have it, that

* See. 177.

they resist the Gospel, because it requires 'em to believe things incomprehensible? I assert, and think I have prov'd, that Idolaters have their Understanding as much darken'd, and stuff'd with as many ridiculous and extravagant Prejudices, as Atheists.

SECT. CLXXXVIII. *How the Pagan Religion tended to make Men Atheists.*

WHEN I attentively reflect on't, it appears, that Atheists were not indeed of the best Mold to make bigotted Votarys to Paganism; but I don't find why their Conversion to the true God shou'd be more difficult than that of Idolaters. The Pagan Religion taught things so ridiculous concerning the Divinity, that any Man of good Sense, who had grown up in Atheism, wou'd chuse to continue in his Principles, rather than acknowledg such a set of Gods as those of the Heathens. 'Twas besides a Religion authorizing the most abominable Crimes; and this it was made the Atheists scorn and detest it as a piece of State-Policy, equally cruel and * illusive: This occasion'd their saying, Were Religion given by the Gods, 'twas rather a Mark of their Wrath than Goodwill towards Men. This, in short, prevail'd with many to renounce it, and betake themselves to Atheism. Hear what † *Plutarch* delivers.

* Religio peperit scelerosa atque impia facta,
Aulide quo pacto, &c.

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum. *Lucret. l. 1.*

† *Traité de superstition, traduit par Mr. Le Fevre.*

'Tis Superstition, says he, gave Birth to Atheism; and 'tis this daily gives a handle for its justifying and defending it self, if not with Justice, at least with Colour and plausible Pretence. For they who first embrac'd Atheism, were not mov'd by any Flaws they observ'd in the Heavens or the Stars, in the Seasons of the Year, or Revolutions of the Sun, which by its Motion makes the Night and the Day; nor yet by any Defect or Inequality in the Provision made for the several Species Animals, or the Production of the Fruits of the Earth: No, Superstition alone was the original Cause; its strange Behavior, its ridiculous Passions, its Speech and Gesture, its Sorcerys and Enchantments, its Mazes and Wandrings, its filthy and abominable Purifications, its Drums, its shameful beastly Incontinence, its barbarous Mortifications, the Crueltys exercis'd on it self in the open Temples; these fine Things all together are what gave some Persons occasion to say, 'twere better Men had no Gods at all, than such as cou'd approve these Practices, cou'd take Pleasure in Services so strange, abuse their strictest Votarys, be angry nobody knows why, and disturb'd about Trifles. In effect, had not the Gauls and Scythians been much happier in never hearing of Gods, in never having had the least Thought or Idea of 'em, than in believing there were such Beings, yet such as took Pleasure in the Effusion of human Blood on their Altars, and accepted these barbarous Sacrifices as the thing in the World most agreable to their Nature, and most worthy their Majesty? And how much better for Carthage, had a Critias or Diagoras been its Legislator, Men who believ'd neither a God nor Spirit, than offer Saturn his usual Sacrifices?

The Religion of Idolaters being such as we see, there's no Probability an Atheist wou'd change
sides,

sides, or bear a part in their comical and criminal Worship. But were the Christian Religion fairly propos'd, which teaches concerning God, only all things great, and holy, and sublime; which enjoins the practice of the purest Vertues, and the most conformable to right Reason, he cou'd not have the same Difficultys to alledg: So that unless the reigning Passion of his Soul, or some prodigious Stupidity obstruct, he must see that embracing the Gospel-Profession is infinitely a more reasonable choice than the way he is in.

SECT. CLXXXIX. *The Man is extreme corrupt, he can't endure Religion's commanding a Crime.*

I Can't forbear making a short Reflection in this place on a Caprice of the Human Mind; That tho a dear Friend to Vice, yet it won't approve its being authoriz'd by the Precepts of Religion. The same Men who reject the Gospel on the account of its austere Morality, wou'd with greater Horror reject a Religion, enjoining infamous Riots and Debaucherys, were such a Doctrine propos'd to 'em, while in a capacity of Reasoning, and before they were lost in the Prejudices of Education. There's not a Debauchee nor Mifs in *Paris*, that wou'd not lift Stones at a Preacher, who shou'd have the Front to tell 'em God approv'd their criminal Pleasures. How loose soever the Lives of most Christians be, 'tis probable, did a Heretick arise, who taught openly and without disguise, that the Gospel indulg'd Men in every Thought of their Heart; he'd make no progress at all, or make much less than if affecting au-

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stere Ways, and railing with extreme Liberty at the Manners of eminent Men. People were cautious of scandalizing the very Gentiles, by broaching Doctrines which were an Inlet to Licentiousness; and therefore *Lucretius* in his Proem, opening his design of reasoning on the Principles of *Epicurus*, that glorious Religion-Tamer, adds very sily, for fear of startling the World, * *No body shou'd thence infer he design'd to favor Crimes, since 'twas Religion which often committed the blackest.*

It seems strange we shou'd be oblig'd to such caution with Mankind; but this is another of the Contradictions in his Frame. Considering the general Inclination to satisfy our desires, we ought to run after those who preach a general Indulgence: and yet we abhor 'em. Since a loose Morality looks so abominable in our Eyes, we shou'd cleave to that which is strict: and yet we are scar'd at it. Is it that we'd have a just Medium, which allows part, but won't grant all? But even this, if well examin'd, won't fit us: For either we take all, tho we'd by no means have it freely permitted; or exceed the Point at least, which was fix'd by those who indulge in part.

Politicians have remark'd a like Contradiction in the Minds of Men, with regard to their desire of Liberty. 'Tis a Jewel they're mighty fond of, and yet they cannot bear it. Then they can bear

* ————— Vereor ne forte rearis
Impia te rationis inire elementa, viamque
Indugredi sceleris. —————

Lucret. lib. 1.

Slavery? No, * *they can neither bear a thorow Liberty, nor a thorow Slavery.*

† *To frame a stubborn People to your Will,
'Tis best not treat 'em over-well, nor treat 'em over-ill.*

Then they do best in a Temper between Liberty and Slavery? No, they can never find this Temper, nor long abide in't. || *'Tis the Nature of the Multitude, either to crouch like Slaves, or lord it like Tyrants. That Liberty which lies between both, they know not how to part with, nor how to preserve.*

SECT. CXC. *The Reason of this.*

WOU'D you know the Reason why Men won't away with a Religion which indulges nothing, nor a Religion which permits all? I'll tell you, because of one hand their carnal Lusts are craving for a Good-natur'd Religion; and common Sense tells 'em on the other, That to be true, and worthy our Obedience, a Religion ought to come from God, and God can never authorize Sin. For which Reason, he who sits down to chuse a Religion, and deals honestly with his own Heart, will ne'er chuse one which teaches the practice of Vice; because this very thing shews it's not from God, and that 'tis a pure Invention of

* Nec totam servitutem pati possunt, nec totam libertatem. *Tacit. Hist. l. 1.* † Solon apud Plutarch. in *Parall. Solon. & Poplicolæ.* || *Hæc natura multitudinis est, aut servit humiliter, aut superbe dominatur. Libertatem quæ media est nec spernere modicè, nec habere sciunt. Liv. Dec. 3. l. 1.*

Men, which no body is bound in Conscience to obey. But if he sees a Religion which enjoins the practice of all Vertues in the highest degree, what will he say then? He must acknowledg it has the Characters of Divine, if he examine it carefully, and must resolve to embrace it, unless the Love of Vice with-holds. Which shews, tho an Atheist expresses a Contempt and Horror for the false Religions, we can't conclude he'l express a like for the true, more than an Idolater. On the contrary, he seems to be in a better state for discovering its Divinity, than a Pagan; because the Pagan is not now to think of chusing a Religion. He had one put upon him long before he came to the Use of Reason; he's highly pleas'd with it, and won't so much as examine whether 'tis possible any thing in't shou'd be amiss.

Be that how it will, we'l allow the reclaiming Atheists and Idolaters equally difficult, if consider'd by their Disposition of Heart, equally bad in both, and equally capable of being mended or mar'd by the Impressions of Custom, Education, Acquaintance, or that particular Taste which grows up with us. But as 'tis certain, a Mind wedded to a false Religion, is harder set right than one without any Religion at all; we must allow, that Atheists, take all Circumstances together, are easier converted to the true God than Idolaters.

SECT. CXCI. *Whether the outward Profession of Religion can be any benefit to 'em.*

ONE might add, That Atheists making no Scruple of outwardly professing the Christian Religion, are likelier to be charm'd by it

than Idolaters; who from the false Principles they have imbib'd, abhor the very Name and outward Profession. But to this Reason may be oppos'd the Experience of the *Spanish* and *Portuguese* Inquisitions, which daily discover intire Familys of *Jews*, *Jews* even to Fire and Faggot, who from time immemorial have made profession of Christianity; and the better to impose on the Neighborhood, been very regular in the outward Exercises of the Catholick Religion: Besides, that Atheists, generally speaking, make profession of the Court-Religion. Whence it follows, that for one who bears the outward Form of a Christian, there are a hundred do not. I said, generally speaking, because it's known, some Men utterly void of a Sense of Religion, continue as to the outward Profession in the Sect they were bred, tho it has not worldly Advantages on its side; either that they are void of Ambition, or that the Appearances are kept with less trouble in their own way; or that they have a vanity of being thought constant, or won't disoblige their Friends or Parents, or not be thought to change out of Interest, or for any other Reason.

SECT. CXCH. *Why he has enlarg'd so much on this Matter.*

THese, Sir, are some of the Reasons, by which I not long since heard a Person, as illustrious for his Piety as Learning, prove Idolatry to be worse than Atheism. I fear I have drawn 'em out to too great a length, and insisted too long on an Incident which carry'd me off from my first Design. But as his Discourse touch'd me very sensibly,

sensibly, and made me enter into my self more perhaps than any Sermon, and even apprehend that the little Good which may be in me, is exceeding imperfect, because of the human Motives which mix but too often; I had a mind to know your Thoughts of this Doctrine, and for this Reason explain'd it at large: beside its being highly agreeable to the account of the Fall of *Adam*, and very opposite to the *Pelagians* *. It seems at first sight to extenuate the Atrocity of Atheism: but scan his Design ever so little, you'll see he's agreed, that Atheism in it self is a State of such Malediction, and in which Men are so abandon'd, as strikes a horror; tho he do's not believe it the highest Degree of Reprobation, when compar'd with the Infamys of Paganism.

SECT. CXCI. *A Reflection on Plutarch's Treatise of Superstition.*

IF you compare this Discourse with that of *Plutarch* on a like Subject, I persuade my self you'll find, the Antient has no way the advantage, whether you consider the Matter, or the Manner of treating this Point. I may be allow'd to praise what I have no great part in, and shew wherein he excels one of the greatest Men of Antiquity.

Plutarch's design is to prove, that Superstition is worse than Atheism. Now as Idolatry is infinitely more abominable than Superstition, 'tis plain this Author has work'd on Matter much less odious, less shocking and extravagant than that of the Dissertation I have given you. As for the

* See before Sect. 160.

manner of handling it, 'tis evident there's a greater Compass and Force in the Reasonings here, than in *Plutarch's* Treatise; and an infinite variety of Ideas, which there's not the least appearance he e'er thought of. The Reason he urges most, and which he lays a mighty stress on, is the weakest in the World. He compares the Inquietudes of a superstitious Soul, with the Security of an Atheist; and pretends, because Atheism lets Men enjoy a profound Peace, and Superstition throws 'em into continual Alarms, one is much worse than t'other. With submission to this Great Man, he neither understood the Question, nor reasons aright: For our business is not to compare Atheism and Superstition in their Physical Good, but only with relation to their Moral Effects. Now it's certain, there are some things morally better than others, which yet don't afford so much Indolence and carnal Security. Who doubts but some People's Rest is broke a nights by their meditating on the Importance of Salvation, whilst those who reel to Bed dead-drunk, sleep most profoundly? Must we therefore say, it's better drown one's Senses with Drink, than meditate on the Four last Things? By *Plutarch's* way of Reasoning we shou'd prove, 'tis better lie in the downy Bed of Pleasure, free from Care, than work Night and Day, as an honest Lawyer may do for an oppress'd Client; and that persecuted Vertue is worse than prosperous Vice. He reason'd then somewhat amiss in this place.

Yet I own this Treatise of *Plutarch* is not unworthy of the Praises bestow'd on't by Mr. *Le Fevre*, Father to the Illustrious *Mademoiselle le Fevre*, who has enrich'd the Publick with so many
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learned Pieces: (Pray permit me to give her her due Praises, tho a Hugonot; and don't be of the humor of those morose intractable Catholicks, who think it a Crime in Men of the most Worth, in a * *De Thou*, a *Pasquiers*, a *Servins*, that they express an Esteem for some Hereticks of Renown.) I own further, that where *Plutarch* takes the principal Abominations of antient Idolatry to task, he solidly proves it worse than Irreligion: And the Author of the Summary prefix'd to this Work in *Amiot's* Version, is of the same opinion. He openly defends *Plutarch* against all who condemn this Doctrine: herein of *Arnobius's* mind, who has left us the following Passage, which to me seems very judicious. † *I have often admir'd, says he to the Pagans, when reflecting on your monstrous Theology, with what Impudence you can call those Atheists, and Impious, and Sacrilegious, who absolutely deny the Gods, or doubt their Existence, or maintain they were Men deify'd on the account of some uncom-*

* See Possevin. Judic. de 4 Scriptor. Observ. de Richeome. sur le Plaidoy. de Servins, &c.

† Jamdudum me fateor reputantem mecum in animo rerum hujuscemodi monstra, solitum esse mirari, audere vos dicere quenquam ex his Atheum, irreligiosum, sacrilegum, qui Deos esse animo aut negent, aut dubitent, aut qui eos homines fuisse contendunt, & potestatis alicujus aut meriti causâ in Deorum numerum relatos, cum si rerum fiat atque habeatur examen, nullus quam vos magis ejusmodi par sit appellationibus nuncupari, qui sub specie cultionis plus in eos ingeratis maledictionum & criminum, quàm si aperte hoc facere confessis maledictionibus combibissetis. Deos esse qui dubitat, aut esse omnino qui negat, quamvis sequi sententias immanes opinionum videatur audacia, sine ullius tamen infestatione personæ fidem rebus non accommodat involutis----- Vos verò, &c. *Arnob. lib. 5. advers. Gentes.*

mon Gift, or transcendent Merit. When if we rightly consider things, none so justly deserve these Censures as you, who on a pretence of honoring, bring 'em under a greater Guilt and Reproach, than it's possible by open Reviling and Contradiction. He who doubts the Existence of a God, or denies it point-blank, is guilty of a very bold and monstrous Opinion, but wounds no Person's Honor or Reputation: He only refuses to believe what he can't comprehend ——— But you, &c. Remember, Sir, you can't condemn my Doctor, without condemning one of the Fathers.

If this great Man's Reasoning hold, there's no more to be said. We must indispensably own Comets are not Signs of God's Wrath, since likely to fix Men in the most wicked State 'twas possible for 'em to arrive at. Suffer me now to take breath awhile after this Excursion, tho I have not yet given in my full Answer to the Objection. You shall have what remains in a short time.

August 2. 1681.

SECT. CXCIV. V Answer: *That there's no Example proving, God has miraculously form'd Prodigys for the pretended Conversion of any one to Idolatry.*

TO finish my Answer to the first Objection, I say, Sir, the alledg'd Example of *Horace* is of no force against me. For first, it's not certain there ever was any Thunder or Lightning in a serene Sky, as mention'd in the antient Catalogue of Prodigys. Had this been frequent, *Lucretius* had ne'er presum'd to maintain the contrary in a publick Work, but rather endeavor'd to assign the

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the natural Cause by the Doctrine of his Atoms. Beside, that our Relaters of Prodigys, with all their exactness, don't mention this as I remember. Farther, were it true that there really had been Prodigys of this kind, 'twou'd prove nothing concerning Comets, because it wou'd not prove that God had caus'd this Thunder miraculously to convince Men of a Providence, as 'tis pretended he forms Comets miraculously to warn 'em of the Evils to come. I desire to know the reason for believing that God work'd Miracles, so needless on one hand, and so favorable to Idolatry on the other, as those Peals, for example, of Thunder in a clear Sky.

SECT. CXCV. *How unprofitable Miracles had been among the Pagans in one respect, and how favorable to Idolatry in another.*

I Say, they favor'd Idolatry, because they led Men to believe, that the Gods requir'd more Sacrifices and new Honors, and by their Fears render'd 'em ingenious at inventing new Ceremonys either Superstitious or Idolatrous. I say likewise, they were useless, because the World was overstock'd with Temples and Religions; and the few who follow'd the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, were no more to be mov'd by a Clap of Thunder in a clear Sky, than by ordinary Thunder, and all the other wonderful Works of Nature. And if *Horace* was unconverted till he heard such a Clap, 'tis undoubtedly because he was a Convert only from Caprice, or Chance; like the *Jew*, who unmov'd by all the Passages of Scripture which prove
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a Trinity, fancy'd he lit on a Demonstration at last in some mysterious Combination of the Letters in a certain Text, which no body alive but himself cou'd perceive.

SECT. CXCVI. *The Unprofitableness of converting an Epicurean to Idolatry.*

AFTER all, *Horace's* Conversion was really so small a matter, 'twas hardly worth a Miracle. He had been an Epicurean all his life, and now became an Idolater. Do you think, Sir, he was a hair's breadth the nearer to the Kingdom of Heaven? Can you say this was a fair Step towards coming into the Bosom of the Church? Do you think 'twas a Miracle well bestow'd, which converted a Soul to Idolatry? For don't mistake, *Horace* broke not with one of his Mistresses, nor retrench'd in any Article of sensual Pleasure. His Conversion amounted to no more than believing the Gods govern'd the World, instead of believing, as he did before, that they led a Life of Bliss free from all care; and paying his Adorations to *Jupiter*, and all the Divinitys of *Rome*, in the publick Assemblies of the *Roman* Idolaters. For any thing further, he diverted himself in his old Way, and thereby pass'd to a Belief as erroneous and injurious to the Gods as that he abjur'd; because he suppos'd it as lawful to gratify his Passions under Gods which govern the World, as under those which do not; and consequently, that the Gods require of us no Purity of Heart; or if they do, one ought not however to quit his old Track: which is much more shocking, than believing they have no inspection over human Affairs.

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So that, all things consider'd, *Horace*, converted from Epicurism by the pretended Miracle, became much a worse Man than before (the persuasion of a Providence enhancing the Sin) and more ignorant of the Divine Nature: for he's much mistaken who fancies the disbelief of a Providence is the grossest Error concerning the Divine Nature. I own it's a very gross one, and opposite to all Principles of good sense; but affirm, other Errors are more absurd.

SECT. CXCVII. *That there are grosser Errors than the disbelief of a Providence.*

SUCH Errors, for example, as those of the *Greeks* and *Romans*, who built Temples, and ordain'd Feasts and Sacrifices to *Cybele*, as Mother of the Gods; to *Jupiter*, as Husband to his Sister *Juno*; to *Phæbus* and *Diana*, as Children of *Jupiter*, &c. To say nothing of *Romulus*, Founder of the City of *Rome*, and one of its principal Gods, whom they believ'd the Son of the God *Mars*, and *Rhea Sylvia*, sprung from the unchast Amours of the Goddess *Venus*: So that they cou'd not trace the Genealogy of *Romulus* without discovering that a Goddess had debauch'd the good *Anchises*, and a God had ravish'd a tender Maid, whose Virginity was consecrated to the Goddess *Vesta*; an Act wou'd have cost any mere Man his Life, when Crimes of Incontinence had the highest Toleration. Who sees not that this is conceiving the Gods under a meaner and more unworthy Idea, than that which deprives 'em of the Government of the World?

II. Such likewise were the wild Opinions of those, who, as I have already observ'd, ras'd the Temples of the Gods, when they thought themselves ill us'd; and of all in general, who tho' perswaded of a Providence, deny'd nothing to their Lusts and Passions. For either they must suppose the Gods approv'd these ways, or else that one need not trouble himself whether they did or no. Detestable Thought! and infinitely more injurious to the Deity, than believing with *Epicurus*, he led a life of Ease and Bliss, without perplexing himself with other Peoples Affairs: because it's infinitely more dishonourable to be concern'd in the Government of a City, and suffer all kind of Disorder, than not to meddle in't at all. By this one may perceive the Enormity of that Judgment which Christians form, when they commit a Sin upon mature deliberation: and conclude, that without taking in the Malice of their Heart, they are under a blindness of Understanding no less monstrous than that of a Heretick.

III. Such are the Extravagances of the *Talmud* and *Alcoran*, some of which the Learned *Grotius*, and the Marquis *de Pianezza* mention in their Treatises of the *Truth of the Christian Religion*.

IV. Such, the Opinions of the Modern Jews, who, as some say, believe it a good Work, and highly meritorious in the sight of God, to cheat the Christians, not only by frequenting Mafs with great appearance of Zeal, to elude the Inquisition, but ruining 'em by knavish Bargains, excessive Usury, and breach of Trust. Of which *Leo* of *Modena*, a Rabbi of *Venice*, endeavors to clear 'em, in his Book of the *Ceremonys and Customs of the Jews*, whereof the Learned Mr. *Simon* has lately given a
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second Version. The Rabbi assures us, that they who say or write that the Jews bind themselves by Oath to cheat a Christian every day of their Life, and count it a good Work, invent the Calumny only to render 'em more odious. If his Complaint be wrong, the Jews are bound by Maxims much worse than the Error of *Epicurus*. But if right, their Accusers are led by a more detestable Principle than any of this Philosopher. For nothing's more heretical, than believing God can be pleas'd with the Violation of the common Notions of Equity; And therefore I am amaz'd to see either so many Missionarys in *France*, blind enough to persuade the Magistrates they perform a pleasing Service to God, by oppressing the Innocence of Hugonots, where the demolishing a Church, the expulsion of a Minister, or conversion of some Religionarys may issue; or so many Magistrates weak enough to give into these unhappy Maxims. 'Twere infinitely better they were indifferent to all Sects of the Christian Religion, than be carry'd away with so impious a Zeal in favor of the True.

V. Of this stamp likewise was the Thought of the Emperor *Marcus Aurelius*, who imagin'd the Gods had a Body which took its Nourishment from the Exhalations, as the Stoicks taught the Sun was fed by Vapors arising from the Ocean, and therefore always ply'd within the Zodiack, for fear of moving too far from its * Sustenance.

* Ne longius discederet a cibo. *Cicer. de Nat. Deor. lib. 3.*
 Ut omnis latitudo, quæ sol cum quinque vagis, & luna ultrò
 citroque discurrent, habeat subjecti humoris alimoniam. *Macrobius*
in somn. Scip.

The Emperor *Julian*, who mentions this Thought of *M. Aurelius*, do's not say by what particular kind of Exhalations the Gods were refresh'd. But I think it probable he means the Perfumes and Smoke of the Sacrifices: for the antient Pagans not only believ'd that the departed Souls came to drench in the Liquors pour'd out on their Sepulchres during their Sacrifices; but it appears from some Passages of the Fathers, that the Heathen Gods were very liquorish, and ran after the Odors of the Victims with extreme greediness. If *M. Aurelius* thought the Gods had need of such Nourishment, he must consequently believe their Worshipers might put 'em out of Commons as oft as they pleas'd.

VI. Such likewise are the odd Conceits of those Superstitious, who represent the Divinity as implacable, unless a hundred little Nicetys are observ'd, or Crimes committed to its Honor; after the example of the *Carthaginians*, already mention'd, who sacrific'd their innocent Children. Whereupon a certain Author crys out very pertinently, * *Alas, miserable Mortals! your ignorance of the Divine Nature is the original Cause of your Crimes.*

VII. Such, in the last place, are those Doctrines maintain'd by great Names among Christians: *That we must not keep Faith with Hereticks: That dy-*

* Mos fuit in populis quos condidit advena Dido,
 Poscere cæde Deos veniam ac flagrantibus aris,
 Infandum dictu parvos imponere natos. *Sil. Ital. l. 4.*

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 Heu primæ scelerum causæ mortalibus ægris
 Naturam nescire Deum. *Id. ib.*

ing in a Conspiracy against a Heretick Prince, is a degree of Martyrdom: That it's lawful to kill an Enemy, rejoice at the Death of a Father, and force Abortion to prevent Scandal: That one is not oblig'd to love God, nor restore what one has stole at several turns, if only a little at a time; with many more too tiresom to enumerate. One can't deny that disowning a Providence is a less Error in a Heathen, than these Doctrines in a Catholick Divine. The former imagines, God has given no Laws; the latter, either that he has given Laws absurd and unrighteous, or that 'tis in Man's Power to annul the Laws of God, and pervert their Holiness by his Interpretations; which is infinitely more shocking than believing that God leaves the World to Chance.

SECT. CXCVIII. *A Reflection on what happened upon occasion of the 65 Propositions condemn'd by the Pope.*

I Understood about two years since, not without exceeding Consolation, That his Holiness, mov'd by his great Zeal for the Glory of God, and sollicitated by certain Orthodox Divines, had condemn'd 65 execrable Propositions which had appear'd in several Books, or Theses publicly maintain'd. My desire to see the Act of Condemnation, made me apply to several Friends at the same time for a Copy. But they wrote me word, the Parliament of *Paris* had issu'd so strict an Order against this good Decree, that no body dare sell it. This surpriz'd me mightily, I cou'd scarce believe it true. Some days after a Gentleman newly come from *Paris*, makes me a visit, and main-

maintain'd, before five or six of us then in Company, That the Condemnation of this Decree was very just, or at least excusable; because 'twas of great importance, says he, that a famous Society, one of the chief Supports of the Catholick Religion, shou'd not have a Slur put upon it, at least indirectly, by the condemnation of the 65 Propositions: and this was what *Messrs.* of the Parliament wou'd provide against, by blasting the Act of Inquisition, which tended to discredit the R. Society of Jesus. In a word, that the Society was grown so formidable, that the Members of the Parliament thought themselves oblig'd to this Complaisance, for fear of drawing their Resentments, and the Effects of their Credit, upon their own back. Here I stop'd my Gentleman, and told him, his Ambition of being thought a true *Frenchman*, put him upon advancing things injurious in the main to Religion, and to the Nation; and he ought not to insinuate at this rate, that things were come to such a pass, that a Society of Religious Men instituted within this last Century purely to dedicate themselves to whatever concern'd the Glory of God, shou'd become so formidable in the State, that the most august Sovereign Court of Judicature in the Kingdom, which heretofore had so bravely exerted it self to bring this very Society within the bounds of Duty, shou'd now be oblig'd to scandalous Compliances for fear of incurring their displeasure. No, Sir, says I, we can ne'er believe this; and perhaps you talk at this rate, only to expose an Illustrious Body, which might have done you some ill Office, to the publick Hatred and Contempt. To revenge your self, you'd silyly make us believe, it has taken

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abominable Doctrines, condemn'd by our Holy Father the Pope, into its Sovereign Protection. And without giving him time to reply, I turn'd the Discourse on a Subject, with which I remember I had formerly entertain'd you.

SECT. CXCIX. *Reflections on the different manner of proceeding against Vices and Errors.*

I Say, I ever thought it strange there shou'd be such a difference made between Error and Vice; and that the Spirit of the Catholick Church shou'd be so much more bent against Tenets which don't exactly fall in with its Decisions, than against a disorderly Life. We make no scruple to give a Man Christian Burial who has lost his Life in a Duel, and was notoriously guilty of all Excesses. If a Noble Lord stealing by Owl-light into another Noble Lord's House to lie a Night with his Lady, happens to be kill'd in cold Blood by the Servants, he shan't be bar'd lying in a stately Chappel, with his Epitaphs and Inscriptions about him. But if a Doctor of Divinity, of irreproachable Manners, has the misfortune to refuse Confession on his Death-bed, alledging it's sufficient to repent and confess his Sins to God, he shall be mention'd with Horror, and deny'd a Grave in consecrated Ground. *Jansenius*, whose Morality was so rigid, and who made the necessary Submissions to the Church, cou'd not enjoy the Elogys of his Epitaph in peace, upon a pretence he was Heterodox in the Doctrine of Predestination. If a Man at Confession declares he has a Scruple concerning the lawfulness of invoking the Saints, he runs a greater risk of being sent away without Absolution,

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tion, than if he confess'd a Murder, or Theft, or Adultery. Abundantly greater: The Errors which have no relation to a good Life, are darted back with much fiercer Wrath, than those which have. Shou'd a Doctor of the *Sorbon* have the boldness to raise a Doubt concerning the Mystery of the Incarnation; I don't mean as to the substance of the Article, but the manner of explaining it: Shou'd he, for example, affirm, That the Human Nature of JESUS CHRIST is a Person, without designing to derogate in the least from the Merit of his Sufferings; or advance, that the Human Nature was so united to the Divine, that the Will of one became the Will of the other; they'd immediately proclaim him a *Nestorian*, a *Monothelite*, his Benefices be beg'd, and himself run the risk of being ston'd to Death. But shou'd he think fit to broach some Maxims only of loose Morality, like the famous *Escobar*, the World's content to say he has done amiss; and after several Negotiations, perhaps, obtains a Censure of his Doctrines. Sure I am that in *Spain*, where infinite scandalous Propositions, and directly opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel, are advanc'd with Impunity; shou'd a Man lay down in his Thesis, that the Body of St. *James* is not in *Galicia*, that the Blessed Virgin is not Queen of the World, and that she was not translated visibly into Heaven, he'd be drag'd without Mercy to the Prisons of the Holy Office, and never see the Sun more.

Shou'd a Parcel of Hugonots be found assembling in *Rome*, and worshipping God in their way there's no kind of Severity which wou'd not be exercis'd against them, and against the Place of their

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† Fra.
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their Assembly: Yet not a word is spoke against the Courtizanes, who for so many Ages have enjoy'd a full Liberty of Conscience in this first City of the Universe. The Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops, who drew up a Project of Reformation by the Appointment of Pope *Paul III.* a little before the Council of *Trent*, * proposes, among other Particulars, the reforming an Abuse crept into *Rome*, by which the Courtizanes were allow'd to go about the Streets, either a Foot or in Litters, magnificently attended, and lodg'd in the noblest Houses. But after several Debates † of the Cardinals in a full Consistory, on this as well as other Articles, 'twas resolv'd to adjourn to another Opportunity, and so the Matter rested ever since. Which exposes us to two very perplexing Objections: First, That People can't comprehend by what Authority a greater Indulgence is granted to Immorality than Heresy. Secondly, That it appears not why Heresy, if punishable in a Hugonot Citizen of *Rome*, shou'd not be punishable in a Courtizane of the same Place: I say, Heresy in a Courtizane, because it's certain a Strumpet who goes on in her Iniquity for twenty or thirty Years together, whatever compliance or regard she may bear to the Doctrine of the Church in her general Judgment, forms a private Judgment every day of her Life, by which

* In hac urbe Meretrices ut Matronæ incedunt per urbem, seu Mulâ vehuntur, quas affectantur de mediâ Die nobiles, familiares Cardinalium, Clericique habitant etiam insignes ædes. Corrigendus etiam hic turpis abusus.

† Fra. Paolo *History of the Council of Trent*, Lib. 1. ad an. 1537.

she resolves in her own Breast, that 'tis better disobey the Laws of God than obey 'em. Who dare deny that these Judgments, so often reiterated, don't render a Soul exceeding heretical? Why then if the Courtizane be spar'd in quality of a Prostitute, is she not punish'd in quality of a Heretick? You'll say, because she does not dogmatize against the Decisions of Councils. What, is it not dogmatizing against the Decisions of Councils, to keep open School for propagating Impurity? Does not one make more Disciples by preaching from * Example on any point, than by mere dry Theological Lectures? Besides, a Burgher of Rome, who never went to Mass, but perform'd his Devotions at home in the Protestant way, cou'd he be said to dogmatize? No; wou'd they tolerate him tho?

I vow, Sir, these things have always appear'd strange to me; and you can't forget how the late Mr. *Abbé de Villars*, Author of *The Count de Gabalis*, prest you one Day in my presence on this very point. I remember he told you very agreeably, *He did not wonder the bulk of Divines treated Vice and Errors in Morality much more tenderly than Heresy and Errors in speculative points, because they found themselves much abler at propagating Human kind, and the ways of Sin, than at propagating Heresys. But for your part, says he, who are a Man of fine Thought and Wit; I'm amaz'd you shou'd not beg quarter for the Sallys of the Understanding, rather than those of the Passions.*

* See the Dialogue between Socrates and the Courtizane Calisto, in Elian, l. 13. c. 32.

SECT. CC. *That there are some Errors not criminal.*

WE reason'd on these points with that Freedom so dear to all genteel-spirited Men, which is often taken when none of the common People, nor bigotted Doctors are by ; two sorts of Men one must have a special Reverence for, the first for fear of staggering their Faith, the latter for fear of becoming the Object of their fiery Persecutions. If ever you and I meet, I may perhaps communicate our Reflections that Day in my Garden, and 'tis probable shall find you guess at a good part of 'em ; for one need not be a Conjuror to know, that they who reason on this Head with that Disposition of which I have given you a Specimen already, go upon this Principle, that Man is never allow'd to give into Vice, whereas there be infinite Errors which he may hug himself in with Impunity. I mean not any Errors in Philosophy which make a noise in the Schools, whilst Orders of Council are procur'd to silence the most rational Philosophers ; for it's plain nothing's more innocent in the sight of God than blundering with the *Aristotelians* about the Nature of *Universale a parte rei*, substantial Forms, &c. I speak of Theological Errors, and maintain we all form a thousand false Judgments concerning the Nature of God and his Decrees : I affirm, all our People are *Anthropomorphites* and *Nestorians*, and that there is not a Peasant, who after learning by rote that God is a Spirit, and that JESUS CHRIST is God and Man in the unity of Person, does not form Ideas directly contrary to the Words which

he pronounces like a Parrot. So that all Error resting in the Understanding, a Man may be as Orthodox in his Words as he please; still he's a *Nestorian*, if he believes JESUS CHRIST, as Man, is a Person as properly and perfectly as himself. Now thus every Peasant living conceives him, very far from taking the right Distinction in this Case. What a Variety of Errors are there concerning the Nature of Angels and human Souls! some of the Fathers have not stuck to rank 'em among corporeal Beings, and say human Souls are propagated by Generation. Cardinal *Cajetan* in these latter Ages makes no scruple of teaching, that Angels are material Substances, little valuing the Authority of the Council of *Lateran* under *Innocent III.* where several eminent * Theologists tell us, the Spirituality of Angels was asserted. Some have gone farther, and even taught, that God is corporeal. These are Errors of so gross a nature, that were there Punishments for false Philosophy as well as for false Syntax, a Scholar who entertain'd such Opinions wou'd deserve a great many more Lashes than he who broke the Rule, *Mobile cum fixo*. But all this while, Sir, our common People, who are *Anthropomorphites* or *Nestorians*, and they who believe Spirits extended, and Philosophers who form such unworthy Conceptions of the Divinity, and Theologists who distinguish so many kinds of Wills in God, so many Knowledges, and so many Decrees; all these, I say, err without offending God: and there's no Calumny, how small soever, which is not a more heinous Offence

* Gregor. de Valent. in 1 Disput. 4. Quæst. 2. Vasques
Disp. 78. cap. 3.

than all these Errors put together. For this reason, that these Errors are wholly involuntary, and that Men form these blind Judgments as well without Malice as without Liberty; whereas we run into moral Vice of all kind, from the highest to the lowest, with the full Exercise of our Liberty, and a clear Knowledg of the Evil we are about to commit.

Shou'd you guess we made this Reflection, you guess right, for it's true we carry'd it as far as 'twou'd go: Yet without convincing our Gentleman, who still insisted, and others besides him, that Man becomes criminal only by refusing to believe as the Church believes; he only confuted us by saying, *Were he a Prisoner in the Inquisition, he'd chuse to have as many Bastards to answer for as Charlemagn e'er got, rather than have taught, as Galileo, that the Earth turn'd round the Sun.* He was right, for *Galileo* had ne'er been brought to trouble, if instead of following *Copernicus* he had follow'd a Whore.

SECT. CCI. *What makes one Error more sinful than another.*

TO return to my Subject, I say, the Blindness of *Epicurus*, which obstructed not his honoring the Gods, or living a very regular Life, is nothing near so damnable, as those Errors of which I have given you a small Sample. For how comes one Error to be worse than another? From hence, I. That one is more wide of the Truth, and disparages its Object more than the other. II. That one leads to greater Crimes than the other, and in this last Circumstance principally consists the

sting of Error. Now I maintain, these Errors which I have instanc'd are as wide of the Truth, and as injurious to God as the Doctrine of *Epicurus*, and attended with more abominable Iniquitys. So, Sir, you'll allow me to believe, that *Horace*, converted from *Epicurus's* Principles, might have been in greater Errors than he was before.

SECT. CCII. *Had God work'd Miracles to declare his Goodness to the Pagans, he had work'd for the false Gods.*

WHAT is't to me, if *Horace* entertain'd reasonable Notions of the Nature of *Jupiter*, if he admir'd, if he ador'd his Patience and Justice, if he became a Votary? For since God is not to be glorify'd by any Honor paid to false Divinities; since on the contrary all Sentiments of Fear and Love for these, are Acts of Idolatry; it's evident the Prodigy which converted this *Epicurean* cou'd produce nothing agreeable to Almighty God: Whence it follows, That God never produc'd this Prodigy miraculously, nor any Comet to convince the Pagans of his Goodness, Patience, or Justice; because this were working for *Jupiter*, and for the other false Gods, and not for himself. And here, in Conclusion, is my full Answer to the Difficulty which I started.

SECT.

SECT. CCIII. 2d Objection: *Comets are produc'd without a Miracle. God might work Miracles among Infidels. God design'd to make himself known by the means of Comets. All Acts of Idolatry, occasion'd by Comets, will render Men more inexcusable.*

I Don't doubt, a World of Difficultys will spring up in your Mind as you read over my Answers; but I conceive they may be all reduc'd to these four: I. That the whole Force of my Reasoning arises from a supposition, that Comets are miraculously form'd; and this you'l perhaps deny. II. That it follows from my Reasons, God cou'd never work Miracles among Infidels; because if I am to be believ'd, these Miracles must only prompt Infidels to redouble the Exercises of their false Worship. III. That I suppose, the Intention of God in forming Comets cou'd only be giving new Life to the false Devotions of Idolaters; which is a wrong Supposition, because God, on the contrary, proposes only to manifest himself. IV. And lastly, that all these Consequences of the Appearances of Comets, with which I have made so much noise, are only Abuses of the Grace of God, which will serve to render Men more inexcusable.

SECT. CCIV. I. Answer : *If Comets were Signs of what happens after their Appearance, 'tis necessary they shou'd be miraculously form'd.*

IN answer to the first Difficulty, I say, it's impossible Comets shou'd be Indications of the Events which happen in the World, unless miraculously form'd. Thus I demonstrate it: Since Comets are not the natural Cause of those Events which follow, as I have already prov'd, and as will further appear by what remains; 'tis necessary towards their being stated Signs of these Events, there shou'd be some indispensable Connexion between the Comets and them. Now this Connection is absolutely impossible, if Comets be purely the work of Nature. Consequently either they don't preface what follows, or they are miraculously produc'd.

SECT. CCV. *A List of several Hypotheses which may be follow'd in reasoning on Comets.*

TO prove this Connection impossible, I must desire you to run over with me, the several Hypotheses of Philosophers for explaining the Nature of Comets. I. Some suppose 'em a vast pile of dry and inflammable Exhalations, which being once set a fire, must appear to our view so long as there remains any stock of Fuel to feed on. This is the Opinion of *Aristotle*. They who won't be wholly beat out of it, since 'tis discover'd by the Parallax that the Comets are above the Moon, have vary'd from this Opinion, as to the source of

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the Exhalations only : For whereas *Aristotle* imagines 'em intirely supply'd from the Earth ; these on the contrary say, the Earth contributes no part of 'em, but that the Planets are at the whole Expence. II. Another set of Philosophers will have it, that the Comets are a cluster of several small Stars, which in Conjunction are able to form so large and luminous a Body, tho each of 'em singly and apart is invisibile. III. Others believe 'em a Portion of the Celestial Matter, which becoming hard and condens'd, reflects the Light of the Sun towards us. IV. Many believe 'em Stars as antient as the World, and moving as regularly as the Sun; but because the Line they describe touches our World on some of the out Skirts only, we can never see 'em but while they take their course by those parts. V. The *Cartesians* suppose, that the Universe being divided into several Vortex's, each of which has a Sun in its own Centre, it sometimes happens, that one of these Vortex's is absorb'd into those which surround it ; because the Sun which posselt its Centre, being cover'd over with a thick Crust, loses that Force of moving a certain Portion of Matter round it self, which form'd its Vortex. Now as nothing's lost in Nature, the surrounding Vortex's gain by the Dissolution of this, each according to its degree of Force. The Sun of the ruin'd Vortex, now become an opaque Body, follows the same Fate, and is drawn into one of the adjacent Vortex's ; if into ours, it forms a Comet during its stay.

SECT. CCVI. *That neither of these Hypotheses discovers any natural Connexion between the Comets, and what happens upon Earth after their Appearance.*

EACH of these Hypotheses has inexplicable Difficultys. But as this is not the Business in hand, I only observe, that whatever opinion we go by, it is equally impossible to assign any natural Connexion between the Appearance of a Comet and the Events which follow. For towards such a suppos'd Connexion, 'twere necessary, that whenever, for example, the Powers of second Causes had gather'd the dry combustible Exhalations of the Planets into a Body, and set fire to 'em; our Earth at that critical juncture shou'd be provided to supply matter of Pestilence, Dearth, subterraneous Fires, Hurricanes, &c. and Men be dispos'd to revolt from their Allegiance, burn Citys, conspire against their Prince's Life, form Plots for the Subversion of the establish'd Religion, breed Sects and Schisms, seize their Neighbor's Estates, draw on themselves the just Indignation of a potent Prince, refuse, against all Equity and good Conscience, to give up Provinces unjustly acquir'd. In effect, since all allow Comets are the Causes of those sad Disasters they are suppos'd to presage, we shou'd look no higher than the Earth, and the Dispositions of the Heart of Man for a Cause. Now 'tis impossible to conceive, how these Dispositions in the Earth and in the Heart of Man, shou'd concur precisely at the time when a great Pile of combustible Exhalations is got ready in the Heavens. It's therefore im-

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impossible to comprehend this pretended Connexion.

I say, it's impossible to conceive, how this Earth and the Heart of Man shou'd be dispos'd in such a manner, as is requisite for obtaining the Effect in question; because the Changes and Alterations in the Earth depend on several Causes different from those which produce the Alterations in the Heavens: Nor is the Action of our Elements on one another, regulated by that Action above, which inflames or tempers the Planets. For example, a South Wind, which in some Provinces blasts the Farmer's Hopes, does not hold in its Breath till *Saturn* has discharg'd a great quantity of fuliginous Vapors; whether this Planet be in a hot or cold fit; whether its Pores be shut close, or whether they emit Plenty of Vapor; the South Wind blows, if Sun or any inward Heat rarefy certain Corners of the Earth, which depends not in the least on the Circumstances which *Saturn*, or *Jupiter*, or any other Planet is in. As for what concerns Men, they are sometimes stir'd up to Rebellion by the Ambition of a great Man: sometimes the Rabble rise to rescue a Darling Brute from his just Punishment. Wars between Princes spring from various Reasons of State, or Passions which change for a Trifle. A Detail were endless, of all the Reasons which beget civil and foreign Wars; but one may safely affirm, that nothing of this kind is concerted in the Region of *Jupiter* or *Saturn*. It's evident then, there's no Connexion in nature between what passes here below after the Appearance of Comets, and this Appearance.

SECT. CCVII. *When there's a Subordination of second Causes, and when not.*

I Know that all second Causes, as well those which compound and which inflame the Exhalations in the Heavens, as those which temper the Air, and which bring Rain and dry Weather, are subject to one general Cause, which puts 'em into Action with a marvelous Harmony. Yet, I say, the Effects produc'd on Earth vary not with respect to any change in the Order of Effects in the Heavens, because the first and general Cause, which puts all the rest into Action, applies by the Powers of each in particular, without recurring, for the Effects of one Cause, to the Powers of another. For example, to produce Fire in Wood, the general Cause considers only the Virtue of the Fire apply'd. Be all the other Causes in Nature dispos'd as you will, be the Sun eclips'd, Rivers froze over by a North Wind, be there Rain, or Snow, or Battels fought: the Fire burns on, and burns neither more nor less for all this; the first Cause exerts the full Virtue of the Fire, as tho there were no Eclipse, &c. I except those Causes only which may immediately affect the Wood, as Water pour'd on't; for in this Case the Fire operates not with equal Success, nay extinguishes, if the Force of the Water be superior. In all other Cases, its Virtue is in no Subordination to the Virtues of any other Bodys; and consequently the Effects produc'd on Earth don't go hand in hand with those in the Heavens. So that nothing is more unreasonable than imagining the sublunary Bodys are conspiring to starve and infect us
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whenever a great many Exhalations, discharg'd from the Planets, are got to the general Rendezvous; and there take fire.

This appears the more absurd, as we know by Experience, that the very Bodys which hover over the Earth, are not regulated by one another's Steps: But when it's fair Weather in one Country, it may or may not be so in the next. We sometimes see a Plague of Rain in one Province, while another is afflicted with a Drought, yet without its being a constant Rule: For perhaps it shall ne'er happen again, that one of these Provinces is expos'd at the same time to an Inconvenience directly contrary to that of the other. How then can it be conceiv'd, that Causes so distant as Heaven and Earth, whose Qualitys are very different, which act without any Subordination or Dependence on one another, tho all under the Direction of the same General Cause, shou'd yet operate with so exact a harmony, that if one kind take up six Years to produce its Effect, the other shall take up but just as many; if one be disturb'd or forwarded in its Operations, the other must be so too? He renounces common Sense, who can believe such Improbabilitys.

Take notice, Sir, I always suppose Comets concur not as Physical Causes of the Events which happen on Earth; for on this depends the whole force of my Reasoning. I well know, where several Causes are employ'd to the same Action, he who has the directing Part, so adjusts their operating Powers by one another, that they either do or do not advance, according as seems best for attaining the propos'd End. A King, for example, who brings five or six Armys into the Field,
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and without communicating the Occasion to one of his Generals, makes 'em all concur to the same Design, so regulates the Movements of one of these Armys by the Circumstances of the other, that either may properly be accounted the Cause of the other's acting as they do. But the Case is different with regard to the Earth and Planets: For we go on this Supposition, That God do's not apply 'em to the producing of any certain Effect by a Correspondence and Union of Virtues, so as the Planets shou'd perfect and finish what they were to contribute, precisely at the time the Earth cou'd furnish its Quota. On the contrary, we suppose the Planets produce a Comet without the concurrence of the Earth, and the Earth in its turn produces a great many Calamitys without the Physical concurrence of Planets or Comets. In which Case it's evident, there can be no necessary Correspondence of Effects on which to ground a Judgment, that when the Planets have produc'd theirs, the Earth must forthwith produce its own. And consequently, if Comets be Signs of impending Calamitys, God must produce 'em on purpose, when he sees the Earth is brooding these Calamitys; for perhaps it may ne'er happen by the Course of Nature, that when the Earth is in such a disposition, an inflammable Matter shou'd at that critical time be ready in the Heavens to form a Comet.

SECT. CCVIII. *An Explication of this Doctrine.*

I'M no Enemy to the Opinion of one of the greatest * Philosophers of the Age, who supposes God moves all Bodys by the most simple,

* *Father Malebranche.*

general,

general, and uniform Laws; so that there's only one and the same Law for the Motion of Flame here on Earth, and for the Motion of all Matter, at what distance soever 'tis suppos'd. Yet I say, the Alterations which happen on Earth, depend not on the Dispositions of Bodys in any other part of the Universe. Let's suppose a Column of Water, determin'd by the Opposition of surrounding Bodys, and in virtue of the general Laws, move circularly in the midst of the *Rhine*, while the same Causes overturn a House on its Banks. We clearly conceive, tho these two Motions are the Consequence of the same Law, yet one depends not on the other: which manifestly appears from hence, that the Cessation of one, hinders not the Continuance of the other. The Whirlpool in the River continues, tho the House is not in being. Let all the Forests round be set a fire, all the Vineyards destroy'd, the Whirlpool's no way affected. An alteration may follow in the Temperature of the Climate; several particular things be vary'd and diversify'd; yet others remain constantly the same. Hence we have ground to conclude, That the general Laws of Motion might produce the same Effects they now do, with regard to one particular Body, even tho the Dispositions of Matter were intirely different from what they are in a hundred other places besides. And therefore the Earth mayn't necessarily receive one Disposition rather than another, because the General Laws cause one. Modification rather than another in the Sphere of *Saturn*. Else we must say, that because such a Man rose at eight this Morning, and not at six, all the Bodys in a hundred Leagues round, receive Modi-

fications different from what they might have had, if he had got up at six. And this being absurd, we must allow, tho the same general Laws which form Comets where we see 'em, produce all the Alterations which happen on Earth; yet these Alterations are not, by the Appearance of a Comet, become different from what they wou'd have been, had no Comet at all appear'd: And consequently insist, there's no reason the Earth shou'd be dispos'd to such a particular Alteration, to a Pestilence suppose, or Famine; because the Regions of the Planets have suffer'd such a particular Alteration.

SECT. CCIX. *A further Explication on the System of Occasional Causes.*

THE true Reason of this is, That the general Laws of Motion, how simple soever and uniform, are yet executed by the Concurrence of infinite Occasional Causes, whose vast Variety splits as 'twere the general into an infinite Number of particular Causes, which don't appear to have any dependance on one another. For example; *If the Author of Nature has fix'd this General Law, That Motion shall be communicated to the several Parts of Matter, according as they strike on one another; and that the Quantity of Motion which each receives, shall be proportion'd to the Dimensions of the Bodys which hit:* This Law, simple and uniform as it is, must inevitably vary in the Execution, into infinite particular Principles; one of which shall here produce one Effect, another a quite contrary Effect in another Place.

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I don't mean that the Cause of Motion, consider'd in it self, loses its Simplicity; but that complying in one place with one Occasional Cause, and in another place with another, its Effects must be as different and independent of one another, as if produc'd by two different Principles. And, in a word, seeing the Occasional Cause of each particular Motion, is only the Situation and Bulk of the Body mov'd; and that the Situation or Bulk of a Stone pitch'd on the Roof of a House, depends not, either on the Situation or Size of other Stones in the Street, nor on its being hot, or wet Weather, &c. 'tis evident the Force which moves all Bodys in general, when apply'd to the Stone on the House-top, operates only with regard to the Situation and Bulk of that single Stone. It moves indeed many other Parts of Matter at the same time; but its Action on these is not regulated by any thing respecting the Stone. The General Cause finds something in every Instance, which determines it after a particular manner; and consequently, the Stone receives no one Affection more than another, by virtue of the several Motions produc'd elsewhere. And we must not think it strange, that the Effects of Nature shou'd be thus independent of one another, tho proceeding from one and the same Cause, by one and the same Action; because we see the falling of Water on a Wheel produces a hundred different Figures in a Machine, which are all so independent of one another, that tho you stop several of 'em, the rest shall keep playing exactly as they did before.

SECT. CCX. *A Confirmation of this Doctrine, from what happens when Miracles are wrought.*

THIS is further confirm'd by a Consideration of the Miracles recorded in Scripture. One must renounce common Sense, to imagine, because God gave a Motion to Matter within the Borders of Egypt, by a Law different from the General Law; therefore Matter in all other Parts, receiv'd a different Modification. Far from it: All things hapned, even in this Country, exactly as they wou'd, had God done nothing extraordinary for his People; the same Harvests, the same Cold, Rain, Winds, &c. The Changes then produc'd in one portion of Matter, occasion no new Change in all the rest. And consequently 'tis not possible to conceive, that the Alterations in our Elements, which cause Plagues and Famines in the Earth, keep pace perpetually with the Alterations which produce a Comet in the Heavens.

'Twere needless enlarging so much on this Matter, had I only to deal with the common Principles, which don't suppose so close a Connexion and Chain of Events, as those of Mr. Descartes.

SECT. CCXI. *An Application of what has been said on the first Hypothesis, to three more of the Five.*

THE Application is obvious to the second, third, and fifth Hypotheses, and shews the Difficulty alike in all; because a Conjunction of several small Stars, the condensing some Parts of the

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the *Ether*, and the converting of a Sun into a Planet on the Dissolution of an intire Vortex, can't in the common Course, or by the Laws of Nature, be so exactly concerted and tim'd with the Action of those Bodys which produce our Calamitys, that one must constantly keep pace with the other.

SECT. CCXII. *That the fourth Hypothesis won't admit the Connexion we speak of.*

Concerning the fourth Hypothesis, I have * already shewn, it's Nonsense that the Bodys which alter our Elements, shou'd finish their Ingredients for a Pestilence, Famine, &c. exactly at the same time that Comets return to any one Point of the Line which they describe. For either the Comets always take up the same Space of Time for finishing their Course, or sometimes fulfil their Revolutions with more dispatch, sometimes with more delay. Chuse which Supposition you please, here's work enough cut out for you.

The first Supposition is most in vogue at present, for we talk now only of the Return of the same Comets at stated Times. Some assign 'em a Revolution † of forty six Years. Others ‖ pretend, that the Comet which lately appear'd, is the same which appear'd in 1577. and shall appear again in 1784. Others think to find their Account better by another Calculation. All support their Opinions by the Testimony of *Diodorus* of *Sicily* ‖, who relates, that the antient A-

* Before, Sect. 33. † Mr. Petit, Intendant of the Fortifications. ‖ Mr. Cassini. ‖ Bibliotheq. Univers. l. 1, 2, & 15.

stronomers of *Egypt* and *Chaldea* foretold the Return of Comets. Let 'em do their best, they shall find a hard matter to reconcile their Notions to the Phenomena; and the Authority of *Diodorus* will stand 'em in little stead, because we're inform'd by other hands *, that *Eudoxus*, who first taught the *Greeks* what he had learnt in *Egypt* concerning the Motions of the Stars, made no mention of Comets. Whence we may reasonably conclude, the *Egyptians* had then made no Observations upon 'em. We may conclude the same from *Conon* his Successor's learning nothing among the *Egyptians* touching the Motions of Comets, how diligent soever in collecting the Observations made by 'em on the Eclipses of the Sun. As for the *Chaldeans*, it's true, *Apollo Myndius*, who boasted of his studying among 'em, is positive they reckon'd Comets among the wandring Stars, and understood their Motions. But *Epigenes*, who likewise pretends he study'd among 'em, and was no way inferior to the other, affirm'd, they determin'd nothing concerning Comets, but believ'd they were set a fire by a Whirlwind.

But put the Case this Supposition were true; I say, there's no probability that Comets, and the Bodys which, by altering our Elements, produce Pestilence, Famines, Tempests and Earthquakes, shou'd act several times successively by exactly the same Advances; because the Dispositions which must concur to these great Disorders in the Earth, are in a perpetual Change. We see Citys, where Flocks and Herds graz'd heretofore; we see only Ruins and Rubbish, where once stood flou-

* Sen. Quæst. Nat. l. 6. c. 3.

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rishing Towns. Marshes are drain'd in one part, while the fruitfulest Plains lie waste in another. Forests are cut down; the Earth opens in some places, and swallows up Mountains which once cool'd all the Country round. Whole Rivers are suck'd into the Bowels of the Earth, or turn'd into new Channels. The Sea drowns some Countrys, and throws up others, as we learn from * *Pliny*, † *Seneca*, ‖ *Pythagoras*, and many Naturalists more. I know not, whether we may believe what *Ovid* makes *Pythagoras* say, That Rivers have been known to turn Salt; but don't doubt some have lost the Qualitys for which they were famous in antient Times; and that therefore our Travelers are wrong in crying out a Cheat, or a Liar, when their own Experience agrees not with the Testimonys of the Antients: And cou'd with Mr. *Guillet* had added this Reflection to his Apology for *Pausanias* written against Mr. *Spon*, who did not find the River *Hales* so cold as the antient Naturalists wou'd persuade. 'Twere no less just perhaps to make the same Answer to those who pretend they found *Egypt* more favor'd with Rain, than 'tis represented in former Days. But this is to be understood without prejudice to those who maintain, the Antients did not always form their Accounts on the exactest Memoirs.

Be it how it will, it can't be deny'd that the Changes I speak of cause a great difference in the Seasons. And did not this sufficiently convince us, cou'd we persist against general Experience, which never shews, during the longest Life, two

* Lib. 2. c. 86, 87. † Lib. 2. Natur. Quæst. c. 26.

‖ Apud *Ovid*. Metam. 15.

Winters or two Summers, two Springs or Falls exactly alike? Is there a Man alive who can pretend he ever saw two Solstices or Equinoxes with the same Wind, the same Temperature of Air, and the same Dispositions in all other respects? Can one reasonably dispute what * *Solon* affirm'd to *Craſus*, that in the space of seventy Years he ne'er had observ'd two Days perfectly alike? I don't believe, since the World was made, there ever were two Days which reſembl'd in every thing, not only with regard to the whole Earth, but with regard to ſo ſmall a part of it as *France*. How then ſhou'd it be poſſible, that the Cauſes which might have taken up forty Years to prepare a Peſtilence, or a Drought in the Days of *Mofes*, ſhou'd prepare it in forty Years, neither more nor leſs, at this time of day, when the Earth is ſo chang'd from what it then was, that of a hundred particular Cauſes which concur'd in *Mofes's* Days to infect a Kingdom, perhaps not ten continue the ſame in theſe? Which muſt neceſſarily produce a diverſity in Effects, and put 'em beyond all Rule; conſequently deprive Comets of their indicative Virtue as to the future, on the firſt Suppoſition.

I paſs over the ſecond Suppoſition, as liable to the ſame Difficultys which occur in the other four Hypotheſes.

* Apud Herodot. l. i. c. 32.

SECT. CCXIII. *A Confirmation of these Remarks from the Contingency of Human Actions.*

TO give these Reasons a greater weight, I must intreat you, Sir, to observe, that 'tis still more impossible, the Mischiefs Men do one another, which in King * *David's* Judgment are even worse than Pestilence or Famine, shou'd happen precisely at the time when the course of Nature has furnish'd Comets, than that the other Evils of Scarcity and Mortality shou'd happen with the same Regularity; because the Disorders of a War depend on a thousand fortuitous Occasions, and on the Human Will, liable to Passions which change ten times a day; whereby no State nor Operation of necessary Causes can keep a regular pace with what depends on the Will of Man.

How for example wou'd you, by the Laws of Nature, have any relation between the Comet which appear'd in the first Year of *Alexander's* Reign, and the Mischiefs this Prince's Ambition caus'd in the World? Is it not plain, if Comets ben't miraculously form'd, That among the rest must be form'd by a necessary Consequence of the Action of the Heavenly Bodys? And do's it not from hence follow it had appear'd, tho it had been *Alexander's* Fate to fall sick and die, or tho he had been kill'd (which was not impossible) in the first Engagement, or that *Darius* had been as brave as *Cyrus*? Yet had either of the three hapned, much Mischief might have been preven-

* 2 Kings 24.

ted ; and consequently this Comet have appear'd, tho the World had suffer'd no extraordinary Ravage. There was therefore no necessary connection between that Comet and the Evils which ensu'd.

No body but fees, had *Alexander* fall'n dangerously ill on the 4th day of his march, his Army had ne'er pass'd the *Hellepont* ; so that 'tis only supposing his Sickness turning to a Palsy, to put an end to his Enterprize as soon as begun. Had he been kill'd in passing the River *Granicus*, there the War had likewise ended ; his Generals had thought of nothing more than getting back safe to their own Homes. Had the King of *Persia* been a Man of *Cyrus's* Form, *Alexander* might have grown grey before he cou'd pierce twenty Leagues into his Country : The Passage of the *Hellepont* had cost him twenty Attacks which wou'd have ruin'd his Army, and put him out of conceit with the Enterprize. So dying without his Conquests, he had not left a set of Successors to fill the World with Violence, Bloodshed and Desolation. You can't but observe in History, that when two Princes of almost equal Power, Courage and Conduct, engage in a War, they fight some smart Battels, take and retake Places, weaken their Armys, ruin each in his turn his Enemy's Country. And what follows ? why they both grow weary of the War, exhaust their Treasures, and strike up a Peace at last without any great Advantages of either side. This had probably been the Case, if *Alexander* and *Cyrus* had liv'd at the same time ; and what hapned between our *Francis I.* and *Charles V.* When either side keeps any thing by the Treaty of Peace, he may
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well be said to buy it too dear, as *Hannibal* justly observes in his Interview with *Scipio*:
 * *Happy had it been if the Gods had inspir'd our Ancestors with such a Heart, that you might have sat down content with the Empire of Italy, and we with that of Africk. For even you who had the advantage in the War, did not find Sicily and Sardinia an Equivalent for the loss of so many Fleets and Armys, and the Lives of so many great Men.*

SECT. CCXIV. *It depends on the least Nicety, that the greatest Events happen not quite contrary.*

THIS all together is the ground of my saying, that the greatest Events which confound the World, depend on Circumstances so casual, that 'tis not possible the course of Nature shou'd furnish any regular Presages of 'em. So that if the Comet which appear'd in the beginning of *Alexander's* Reign, presag'd all the Mischief he did, either by himself or by his Successors, God must have form'd it miraculously for this end; for once again to elude the Presages of this Comet, 'twere sufficient, that *Bucephalus* had rear'd, which he was naturally apt to do, and fall'n over with his Master. One flounce of a Horse, which in other Circumstances signify'd nothing, might have prevented infinite Miserys brought on the

* Optimum quidem fuerat eam patribus nostris mentem datam ab Diis esse, ut & vos Italiae & nos Africae imperio contenti essemus. Neque enim ne vobis quidem Sicilia atque Sardinia satis digna precia sunt pro tot classibus, tot exercitibus, tot tamque egregiis amissis ducibus. *Liv. Dec. 3. l. 10.*

World by this Prince's Ambition. For to him we must reckon all that's Violent and Tragical in the Story of *Lyfimachus*, *Ptolomy*, *Antigonus*, *Demetrius*, *Seleucus*, *Cassander*, and the rest of his Successors; because, were it not for him they cou'd have liv'd happily all their Lives on four or five thousand Pound a Year, and some Employments in *Macedon*: whereas when once they got a tast of Dominion, by lording it over the Provinces, which fell to each by the Partition, they threw the World into confusion by turns, in hopes of enlarging their Bounds. To the end then that this Comet shou'd presage all these Calamitys, it must be suppos'd form'd by a Cause which foresaw *Alexander's* prodigious Ambition, knew he shou'd have to deal with an Enemy below him, that no Sicknefs nor Wound shou'd stop him, &c. Besides, as there needs only one Person plac'd in proper Circumstances to turn the World upside down; and that the second Causes which produce Comets are incapable of chusing their time, or waiting to produce one, till a *Cyrus*, a *Cesar*, a *Mahomet*, an *Alexander* is ready to come into the World; it's evident, either that Comets presage nothing, or that they are not produc'd by second Causes, but by God himself, who without any regard to the dispositions of Matter, or the activity of surrounding Bodys, claps the form of a Comet to a certain portion of Matter (that's for you, Sir, who are a Peripatetick) or gives the same Matter such a configuration of Parts, Situation, Consistence and Motion, as are requisite to denominate a Comet, without applying the Motion already imprest on Matter, or following the establish'd Laws of the communication of Motion:

Motion: (this according to the Principles of Mr. Descartes) Which soever of the two ways God acts, 'tis still a Miracle, properly speaking.

SECT. CCXV. *A way of conceiving Comets to be Presages without being Miracles.*

LEST you shou'd accuse me of sparing my self in the Argument, I freely acknowledg I can conceive one way of Comets being evil Presages, without being miraculously form'd. Thus: By supposing, that whenever second Causes produce a Comet, God shou'd determine to visit Mankind. It being once suppos'd that God has agreed on such a Signal, it follows, there's a necessary Relation between Comets and the Instruments of Divine Justice, and consequently that Comets are Presages of Calamitys. If I had not a clear Answer at my fingers ends, your first Difficulty might be a victorious Objection.

SECT. CCXVI. *A Confutation of this way.*

BUT I answer, that God in this Case must be suppos'd miraculously to produce a Plague, a War, a Famine, and what follows; because 'tis not possible, as I have already prov'd, that at every time the Celestial Bodys produce a Comet, the Terrestrial shou'd be ripe for producing a Mortality, Death, destructive War, &c. This may sometimes happen, as it sometimes happens to hail when a Queen lies in of a Prince. But we can form no general Rule, if we allow second Causes to take their Course. So that God might not find Dispositions here below for a Pestilence,

a War or Famine, as oft as Nature shou'd produce a Comet in the Heavens. He must therefore send Infections miraculously, destroy the Harvests, kindle a Spirit of merciless War in the Minds of Men, inspire Sedition and Schism, blow up Fires in the Bowels of the Earth, which shattering its nethermost Foundations, open a Grave for intire Provinces; or discharging by dreadful Eruptions, spread Destruction and black Despair far and wide. But who sees not how much all this is unworthy the Wisdom of the Almighty?

I desire to know in the first place, what we gain by denying that God forms Comets in the way of Miracle; since by denying this we are constrain'd to own, he miraculously produces the Evils which follow? Besides, is it not an Impiety and horrible Blasphemy, to say, God urges Men to Wars and Divisions, when not dispos'd enough of themselves to commit all the Ravages he's pleas'd shou'd be annex'd to the Formation of Comets. Farther still, is not this taking out of the Hands of God the Choice of the times, in which the Revolutions of Empires are brought about, and the Punishment of national Sins? For 'twere no longer the Wickedness of Men, and their Abuse of the Graces of Heaven, which mov'd God to visit the Nations of the Earth; but the Conjunction of certain Causes, which keeping the ordinary course of Nature, present Comets on our Horizon. 'Tis well known these Causes always act in the full Extent of their Virtue, and don't proportion their operative Power to the Progress of human Iniquitys. And therefore Comets may as well come out of their hands, when Men begin to repent, as when they are most hardned in their Sins; in which case
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God must be oblig'd to punish, not as his Wisdom shou'd judg expedient, but as the course of Nature had form'd Comets: for on sight of these Stars, Men, in what state soever of moral Life, must be overwhelm'd with Calamitys, either by Miracle or otherwise. Who sees not that this is subjecting God to preposterous Methods, and taking the Moments and Occasions, which he has peculiarly reserv'd to himself*, out of the hands of his Providence? Who sees not that this is going directly against the Declaration God himself † makes to *Abraham*, That he won't, as yet, deliver him the Country of the *Amorites*, because their Iniquity is not come to the height? So, Sir, your shortest way, if you persist in your Opinion, is to say, God forms Comets miraculously when he has a purpose of punishing Mankind, and sees their Passions are likely to make 'em confound the Peace of the World by infinite wicked Courses. I had reason then to maintain, that Comets, if they be Pre-sages, are miraculously form'd.

SECT. CCXVII. Second Answer: *That if Comets were Miracles, they'd be of such a kind as God never vouchsafes to Infidels.*

IN Answer to the second Difficulty, which is, that my Reasons prove God can never work Miracles in an Infidel Land; I distinguish two sorts of Miracles. One, I may say, are speaking Miracles, and expressly distinguish the true God from the false. The others only shew, that there's

! * Acts c. 1. v. 7. † Gen. c. 15.

some Being above Man of transcendent Power. I see no ill Consequence in maintaining, that God never works Miracles of this last kind among Infidels, because they have no Characters on 'em fit to undeceive an Idolater, or likely to inspire him with any other Thoughts than those of the Power and Awfulness of his own Gods, which engages him to adore 'em with greater Ardor. If they have not this Effect, he expresses a more signal Contempt of what he takes to be the true God than he did before: since having new Arguments of his Power or Displeasure, he yet changes nothing in his Conduct. Take him either way, and he aggravates his Sin: for if he improves his false Devotion, he multiplies the Number of his idolatrous Transgressions; if he continues unmov'd and indevout, he's impious in a higher degree. This kind of Miracles therefore serving only to render Infidels more wicked, I don't think it consistent with the Goodness of God to afford 'em any such, and they shou'd rather seem to me so many Snares: to which I add my former Reasons. In this kind of Miracles I reckon Comets, Hurricanes, Earthquakes, Meteors, and fearful Prodigys form'd by God alone against the Order of Nature.

SECT. CCXVIII. *What kind of Miracles God works among Infidels.*

THE other kind of Miracles comprehends all those which God works by Persons fill'd with his Holy Spirit, whom he sends forth to preach his reveal'd Will to Infidels, and convince 'em of the Error of their ways by Notices distinct and intelligible. It's agreeable to the Wisdom and Goodness of

of God to work such Miracles as these among Infidels, when he wou'd call 'em to his Knowledg. Accordingly he sends his Servants at these times, to declare to 'em what's fit to be known concerning the Divine Nature, to set before 'em the Vanity of their false Worship, and teach 'em the manner of serving God according to his own Will. But as preaching without Miracles wou'd be of no effect, God endues his Servants with a Power of performing many wonderful Things. At their word the Fire loses its Virtue; Rivers open to the right hand and to the left; the dead came forth from their Graves; the most incurable Diseases are heal'd. These I call speaking Miracles, because they confirm the preaching of an Apostle, and are a most distinct Testimony of the Truth of his Doctrines. They leave no color of Excuse for continuing longer in the Worship of false Gods, because they, who expressly declare, that *Jupiter's* no God, that the God of the Christians is the only true God, confirm by signal Miracles the Truth of what they preach. There's no room for imagining, that the Gods, whom the Pagans adore, are Authors of these Miracles, because they who work 'em, declare in express Terms, they are false Gods, whose Temples and Altars are to be immediately destroy'd. These, Sir, are the Miracles which God works among unbelieving Nations; I know no others which are proportion'd to the Faculty of an Idolatrous People.

Won't you allow me, that had the Apostles contented themselves with curing the blind and lame, raising the dead, &c. no one cou'd have given the least guess at their Ministry, no one e'er bethought him of examining the Truth of his own Religion,

or believing JESUS CHRIST to be God? All these Miracles had ended in procuring the Apostles a place among the Gods, or making 'em consider'd as Gods come down from Heaven, as happen'd to *Paul* and *Barnabas* * in a City of *Lycaonia*. 'Twas necessary then they shou'd speak out, and declare plainly and intelligibly, by whose Power these Miracles were wrought. I say the same of *Moses*; Had he only wrought Miracles in the Presence of *Pharaoh*, or afflicted his Land with divers Plagues, this King had ne'er understood that the cruel Arts by which he oppress'd the *Israelites*, were displeasing to the Sovereign Lord of the World, or that there was no other God besides the God of the *Hebrews*. Therefore we find the Almighty commanding *Moses* to open his Message to *Pharaoh* in his own Name, and charge him on the part of God to let the *Israelites* go. To confirm his Mission, he gives *Moses* the Power of working Miracles which were astonishing, and transcending all the Illusions of *Pharaoh's* Magicians; and constrains this Prince to confess there was no God like the God of the *Hebrews*.

This shews Miracles shou'd be accompany'd with Words, and Words with Miracles, when there's a Design of declaring the true God to Infidels: And therefore God employs only Miracles of the first kind in Idolatrous Nations. If they don't produce the desir'd Effect, so much the worse for those who harden themselves like *Pharaoh*; not only as they miss the Benefit of their Conversion, but as they resist a Vocation thorowly proportion'd to their Facultys, and which therefore leaves 'em without excuse. They see, they hear

* Acts 14.

distinctly

distinctly what God requires at their Hands; whereas they may say of a Comet miraculously form'd, that it did not declare to them whether *Jupiter*, *Diana*, *Mercury*, or the God of the *Hebrews* sent it; nor distinguish which of all these was the only true God.

SECT. CCXIX. Third Answer: *That God's proposing to make himself known for the true God by the means of Comets, is a false Notion.*

IN answer to the third Difficulty, I can't, I assure you, Sir, comprehend, how God, by setting Comets a blaze over an Idolatrous People, shou'd propose to convince 'em of his being the only true God; and that *Jupiter* and the other Divinitys are only Wood and Stone. For let's suppose one a thorow Idolater, tho otherwise a Man of Sense and Learning, and sound Judgment: Make him reason as long as you please on the appearance of a Comet; lead him thro all the Reflections which may probably arise in his Thoughts on the sight of such a Star: I defy you to find a Train of Consequences, which shall enable him to discover that the God of *Israel*, or the God of the Christians, is the only true God, and that the Gods whom he adores are all false.

I own, if his Thoughts on the Comet led him to consider the Works of Creation, he might arrive at the Knowledg of a Being infinitely Wise and Powerful, supposing he makes a right use of his Facultys. I'm persuaded there's no such thing as an invincible Ignorance of a first Cause, which governs the World. I join with the *Psalmist*,

* that the Heavens, dumb as they are, set forth the Glory of God from one end of the Earth to the other, by the wonderful Symmetry of their Parts, and Regularity of their Motions. I acknowledge with St. *Paul* †, that the invisible Things of God are made visible in the Creation of the World, to those who contemplate his Works. But I say at the same time, that this Idolater, did he raise himself by this means to the knowledge of God, wou'd not owe the Obligation to the Comet; because not mov'd to ascribe more Power and Majesty to his *Jupiter* on account of the Comet, but on account of the Beauty of the whole Creation. Every other Object may furnish him an occasion of reasoning on the Structure of the World, as well as the Comet. He need only consider the Sun, or one of those Phenomena, which as being more uncommon awaken the Attention more, to make as great a progress in this Knowledge, as he might by considering a Comet. I say then, that a Comet not being in its own nature qualify'd to lead us to the knowledge of the true God; being not peculiarly adapted to convey this Secret to the human Mind; being infinitely less proper for this purpose than the Frame of Nature at large, there's no ground to think God shou'd propose to reveal himself this way, and work Miracles of such a nature with such a Design.

[* Psal. 19]

† Rom. 1.]

SECT. CCXX. *The sight of a Comet renders us not more capable of knowing the Nature of God.*

LET's do our selves right, Sir : Do we perceive any particular Talent in the Facultys of our Soul, by which we find our selves enabl'd to make new Discoverys of the Divine Nature, on the first appearance of a Comet ? Let's speak sincerely, and own as to that Point, we are just where we were before ; it's truly a Phenomenon which perplexes all the World. The Philosophers can't exactly tell us how 'tis form'd ; the Astronomers admire its Motion and Magnitude, much more than they can account for either ; the rest of Mankind dread it as a Presage of their ruin : But do's this make 'em understand the Divine Nature a jot the more ? No. The Philosopher is fully persuaded without this Example, that the Works of God are wonderful, surpassing all the Powers of our Understanding. There's no occasion of Miracles, to form his Facultys for the perception of this Truth. He needs only apply his Inquiries to the nature of the least Fly, or the least blade of Grass, to perceive there's more Mystery in these than Natural Philosophy shall ever unfold. The Astronomer was also convinc'd without the assistance of the Comet, that the Motions of the Heavens are wonderful. They who are alarm'd at Comets, knew perfectly well before, that God abhors Sin, and brings Offenders to Judgment. So that after seeing a Comet every night for months together, it happens we all know the Divine Nature neither more nor less than before,

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and yet don't therefore think our selves a jot the more blamable. If our Conscience reproaches on any account, 'tis only that we had not reform'd our Ways. Now if Christians learn nothing new touching the Nature of God by the sight of Comets; Why wou'd you, Sir, have the Pagans oblig'd to learn more than they? If we who are Christians may with Impunity keep at a stand as to Knowledg, provided we continually improve in the Divine Love; how can you imagine God shou'd exact degrees of Knowledg from the Pagans, after the appearance of a Comet, greater than they were posselt of before?

SECT. CCXXI. *Some of the Pagan Nations admitted no strange Religion.*

FOR my part, I vow I can't conceive it. I can't see that a Pagan Philosopher, who apply'd himself to the study of Nature, without having ever call'd the Divinity of *Jupiter* or *Mars* in question, was in such a fair way of being converted by the sight of a Comet: For how shou'd this Phenomenon put him in mind of looking out for a new God, seeing he had not been led into this search by a contemplation of the whole World? If *Jupiter* is Lord of the Universe, if he reigns in Heaven, if the Stars depend on him; why shou'd not a Comet likewise depend on him? But the Comet threatens the Divine Vengeance. Be it so: Do's it therefore follow, *Jupiter* and *Saturn* must be depos'd? Quite contrary; it follows, a Pagan who keeps to his Principles, shou'd honor these Gods with greater Zeal than he did before. The sight of the Comet leads him to this by a natural

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tural Consequence. Each Nation looks on it as a Prefage of its own Calamity: Each believes, that Good and Evil is dispens'd by their Gods; that to prevent impending Calamitys, they must appease their own Gods, and not those of other Nations: Consequently, Comets prompted every Nation and People to pay Honors to their own Gods; and far from suggesting a Thought of changing 'em, rather put certain Nations on abolishing whatever strange Ceremonys might have crept into the publick Worship; for some Idolatrous Nations abhor'd Mixtures of this sort as a kind of Sacrilege. * *Anacharsis* on his return to *Scythia*, was slain by his own Brother the King of the *Scythians*, for presuming to sacrifice after the manner of the *Greeks*: Some † will have it that *Anacharsis* himself was the Zealot, and that he slew another *Scythian*, who attempted on his return from *Greece* to introduce the Mysterys of the Mother of the Gods after the *Greek* Form; which is probably a mistake of *Clemens Alexandrinus*. The *Romans*, who often adopted and added new Divinitys to their old, especially in publick Calamitys, were much fall'n in this Point from their antient Discipline, which forbid all strange Worshipps; as appears from the Sequel of a Passage || already cited from *Livy*; and by another Passage ** in the ninth Book of his 4th Decad.

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* Herodot. l. 4. Diog. Laert. in *Anach.* † Clem. Alex. in *Protrep. ad Græcos.* || *Before, Sect. 209.* ** *Quoties hoc Patrum Avorumque ætate Negotium est Magistratibus datum, ut sacra externa fieri vetarent? Sacrificulos, vatesque foro, circo, urbe*

SECT. CCXXII. *A short Representation of the Inferences from the preceding Remarks.*

TAKE it by which handle you will, I don't see how the appearance of a Comet shou'd be able to change a People's Belief concerning the Gods, or the Ceremonys of the Establish'd Religion, in any other respect, than perhaps the addition of some new Superstitions in certain Countrys: Therefore I still come to this, that Comets had been on one hand very usefess Miracles, and on another very favorable to Idolatry; and on the whole, that 'twere inconsistent with the Wisdom of God to make use of Means for the conversion of Pagans, which not only never did convert 'em, but were even improper for this end. Whence it follows, 'tis false that God had a particular and more formal Design of making himself known for the true God by the means of Comets, than by his other Works of Creation. And this being the Case, my Position is still true, That had God miraculously form'd Comets in the days when Paganism over-spread the World, his Purpose had been to reinflame the Zeal of Idolatrous Nations, each for its own Religion, all the World over. Now as this can't be offer'd without Impiety, it remains, that Comets are Works purely natural, and which presage nothing.

urbe prohiberent? Vaticinos libros conquererent, comburerentque? Omnem disciplinam Sacrificandi praterquam more Romano abolerent? Judicabant enim prudentissimi viri omnis Divini humanique nihil æque dissolvendæ Religionis esse, quam ubi non patrio sed externo ritu sacrificaretur.

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SECT. CCXXIII. *Whether we may safely deny God's doing a thing, when we can't perceive it's of any use.*

HERE methinks you stop me short, to tell me, it's a Temerity highly punishable in such a one as I, to deny God's doing any thing, because the short Line of my Reason can't discover all its wholesom Uses, but sees on the contrary several grand Abuses springing from it. On this occasion I think proper to declare, that I'm intirely convinc'd God do's nothing which is not agreeable to infinite Wisdom. To know God do's any thing, is a sufficient ground to prevent all my Doubts of its being done on the perfectest right Reason. I inquire no farther; and whether my Lights discover its Usefulness or no, it's all one, still I believe the Work most worthy of the Infinite Majesty of God. So that cou'd it be demonstrated by necessary Reasons, or by any infallible Authority, that God forms Comets miraculously as Signs of his Displeasure, I shou'd rest intirely satisfy'd; tho nothing in my Judgment cou'd appear more contrary to the Interests of the true God, or more favorable to those of the False, than Miracles of this nature.

But we're not on such a foot. The Question between us is, whether Comets be Signs vouchsaf'd by God or no. We have no Authority assuring us they are; it's our part then to settle an Opinion from the Inquiries of right Reason: and nothing hinders, but among other Arguments on this Head, we may employ those drawn from the Wisdom, Justice and Holiness of God, to make
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the Negative take place, if we find the Affirmative inconsistent with these Divine Attributes.

Our Schools of Theology, as well as those of Philosophy, teach us not to multiply Beings or Miracles without a Necessity; and thereby authorize us to reject all needless Suppositions, even tho attended with no ill Consequences. On this Maxim we must never have recourse to Miracle, when we may explain by natural Reasons; nor say that God interposes in an extraordinary manner to the production of an Effect, if his Interposition appear absolutely unnecessary, or even repugnant to his Holiness. The Poets are justly ridicul'd; *Homer* in the first place, for bringing in the Gods at every turn, and imploying 'em, against all Rules of good Sense, to unravel their little Plots *. Much more might we be in fault, if without a just occasion we refer'd things to the extraordinary Power of God, which we see may be produc'd by the ordinary course of Nature. When 'tis a Matter well attested that a Miracle's wrought any where, 'tis ridiculous cavilling, on pretence we can't see the usefulness of the Miracle, or on the contrary may see Abuses likely to arise from it: but the Cavil ceases, where there are only ill-grounded Surmises of the truth of the Miracle.

* Nec Deus interfit nisi dignus vindice nodus.

Horat. Art. Poet.

SECT. CCXXIV. *A Reflection on the Maxim of the Pretor Cassius, cui bono.*

CICERO speaks honorably of a Pretor call'd *Cassius*, who in criminal Actions us'd to ask the Accuser when his Proofs were lame, What Motive of Interest had induc'd the Accus'd to commit the Crime in question; supposing very rationally, that Men won't commit Crimes for nothing, and that a Judg ought not, except on a full Evidence, to condemn a Man who is charg'd with Crimes of no profit to him. But 'twere ridiculous, on this Maxim, to require the *cui bono* of an Accuser, who had fully prov'd his Charge; this ought to take place only in doubtful Cases. Shou'd I see a Man commit a Murder before my face, People might tell me as long as they pleas'd, the Murderer must ruin his Interest by such an Action, and must see he shou'd ruin himself; I shou'd not disbelieve my Senses for all this, but rather believe Men acted sometimes against their own Interest, than think him innocent whom I saw commit the Murder. In like manner, when we are certain God do's such or such a thing, 'tis Blasphemy to say it's usefess; God has his own Reasons. But on the other hand, let's take up the Maxim, *cui bono*, when Men, without a shadow of Reason, wou'd persuade us to believe any miraculous Fact.

SECT. CCXXV. *A Reflection on the manner of accounting for the hardness of Pharaoh's Heart.*

TO justify my self, by something of more weight with you, Sir, who are a Divine, I desire you to remember, that the Fathers and Councils have given these words of Scripture, *I will harden Pharaoh's Heart*, an Interpretation vastly different from the literal; and this, because it's manifest the literal Sense is repugnant to the Divine Perfections. For who sees not, that had Almighty God, after sending *Pharaoh* an express Command by his Servant *Moses*, to let the Children of *Israel* depart; and after having by incontestable Proofs demonstrated himself the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, by a positive Act harden'd this Prince's Heart, on purpose to hinder his obeying *Moses's* Message, and to find an occasion of manifesting his Power over an obstinate King; such a Conduct were highly inconsistent with the Notions of Sincerity, Justice, and Holiness? Yet had we an express Revelation asserting, 'twas the Intention of the Holy Spirit these words shou'd be understood in the strictness of the Letter, the Church wou'd not fail paying it a due Deference, by silencing the Voice of Reason, and by representing, that since God, who is the Rule and Fountain of Justice, declares, he has in the strictest sense harden'd the Heart of *Pharaoh*; this Obduration is an Act which wounds neither his Justice, nor Holiness, nor Sincerity.

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To apply this to the present Dispute; I say, since there's no evident Reason, nor Revelation informing us that God has produc'd Comets to be Signs of his Judgments in the World, we are oblig'd to reject the Opinion as false, for this Reason, That God works no such Miracles as are not only useless in themselves, but even repugnant to his Sincerity, Holiness, and Justice.

For if in the Judgment of the Church, all Interpretation of Scripture, which ascribes Actions to God manifestly repugnant to our Ideas of his Perfections, be false; if it's not to be slur'd on us by saying, God has Prerogatives we know nothing of, and which are reconcilable to his other Perfections, tho we can't tell how, such for example as that of hardning *Pharaoh's* Heart in the strictest sense: If, I say, the Case be so, we may safely insist that all Miracles manifestly repugnant to our Ideas of the Divine Perfections, are false, without regard, so long as we are unconvinc'd of the Fact, to any secret Ends or incomprehensible Prerogatives of the Divine Being: For an Obligation to such Reserves wou'd reduce Men to the strangest state of Pyrrhonism that ever was.

So, Sir, till such time as you convince me that Comets have been no occasion of Idolatry, nor a Snare spread for Sinners all the World over, I shall continue to believe that God did not form 'em miraculously to denounce his Anger.

SECT. CCXXVI. Fourth Answer: *'Tis false that the Gentiles were render'd inexcusable, in not being converted to the true God by the sight of Comets.*

I Come now to the fourth Difficulty, which is nothing, after what I have offer'd in answer to the third. For since I have shewn that Idolaters cou'd ne'er, by the help of Comets, discover any new Perfection in the Divine Nature, nor any thing more than that the Gods declaring themselves affronted, threaten'd Mankind; 'tis plain, the Sacrifices, Prayers, and other Honors paid to their false Divinitys, with new redoubl'd Zeal, cou'd not be constru'd an Abuse of that particular Grace, which 'tis pretended God afforded 'em by these Significations of his Anger. I have fully shewn, Comets were not Miracles proportion'd to the reasonable Facultys of Pagans, or sufficient to explode their Prejudices. The Scriptures constantly inform us, that whenever God design'd, the Nations which border'd on his People, shou'd understand that the God of *Israel* was the only true God, he made use of Miracles, which clearly reveal'd this, and distinguish'd him from all other Gods: Whereas Comets at best import only the Wrath of Heaven, which each Nation must reasonably refer to the Gods they ador'd.

We know, besides, that when the time was come in which God thought fit to manifest himself to those who were Strangers to his Name, he took care to have his Word declar'd among 'em by Persons carrying the most visible Characters of

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of a Divine Mission, in the Gift of Miracles, and the bright shining of the highest Vertues; so as none but the wilfully blind cou'd remain in Ignorance. Yet how many Ages were found necessary, how many Martyrs, how many Miracles to destroy Idolatry? If the Blindness of Men was not to be cur'd without Revelation, supported by infinite Miracles; and if Paganism was not to be born down by such a Power without a struggle of three or four hundred Years; what probability is there, that God shou'd think to frighten away all the false Gods of the Heathens with the blaze of a Comet? Had he only will'd this, he had done it. But the purpose of Providence was to convert the Gentiles by the preaching of the Gospel, and not by a dumb Fire, which naturally cou'd inspire only a Sense of Fear.

SECT. CCXXVII. *Comets incapable of bringing Men to the Knowledg of the true God.*

NOW if God design'd not to accomplish the Conversion of Infidels by the means of Comets, it follows, he only design'd they shou'd understand that Mankind was in a fair way of being visited for their Sins, unless they prevented their Punishment by the Exercises of Religion. And if this be the case, how can you accuse the Pagans, who stir'd up their Zeal on all these Signals, of slighting the Warnings of Heaven in an inexcusable manner? Did not they act according to their best Knowledg, and do all cou'd be reasonably expected from 'em? Did not they offer the Sacrifices their Religion enjoyn'd, with all the Ceremonys they judg'd most proper for assuaging the Wrath

Wrath of Heaven? Cou'd they read in the Countenance of a Comet, that this was not the way of appeasing God; and that from the farthest Parts of *China*, for example, 'twas necessary to post away to *Jerusalem*, turn *Jew*, and offer propitiatory Sacrifices according to the Law of *Moses*, to prevent their ruin? This therefore is not what will render 'em inexcusable, but the not making a right use of their Reason tow'ards a discovery of the true God, from the Beauty, and Order, and mighty Power, so conspicuous in all the Parts of the Universe. Their not discerning the Finger of God in a Comet, is nothing in comparison of their overlooking it in the whole Machine of the World. And as one shou'd never call a Man stupid for not acknowledging the Magnificence of a Prince, upon seeing only one of his Pages, if he was not struck with the sight of his whole Court, his Treasures, his Furniture, and Palaces: So Idolaters shall ne'er be charg'd with Folly, for continuing ignorant of the true God, on the appearance of a Comet, but for not acknowledging him in the Contemplation of all his Works together, which render him so conspicuous *. I don't deprive Comets of their due Rank, among the things which shew forth the Greatness and Glory of God, as Showers and fruitful Seasons, Meteors and Planets: Yet I can't believe a special Process will issue against Idolaters, for judging Comets a mark of the Wrath of their own Gods, rather than that of the God of the *Jews*; and less can I persuade my self, that God in the State wherein he saw the Gentiles, gave

* *Tantīs operibus notitiā suā armavit. Tertull.*

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Signs and Miracles, signifying only the Wrath of Heaven in general, and driving 'em in consequence hereof to all kind of Abomination.

SECT. CCXXVIII. 3d Objection: *Comets are a natural Effect, and the natural Cause of the Calamitys which attend 'em.*

I Foresee, Sir, that your Zeal for the inseparable Rights of Holiness and Goodness in God, which allow not his contributing by signal Miracles to rivet Men in an Idolatrous Worship, will put you upon maintaining, that Comets are natural Causes of the Calamitys which attend 'em; and that 'tis in virtue of an Original Law, that Comets are sometimes form'd, which o'course occasion a thousand Mischiefs; as 'tis by an Order purely natural, that Tempests are sometimes rais'd at Sea, which cause as many Shipwracks.

SECT. CCXXIX. Answer: *That 'tis impossible Comets shou'd be the efficient Cause of the Calamitys they are suppos'd to presage.*

THUS I own you'l clear the Divine Providence, because whatever ill use Men may make of the Effects of Nature, God is never the more oblig'd to change the Course of second Causes: And if they are startled at seeing a Whelp with two Heads, if on such an occasion they sacrifice to *Diana* or *Proserpina*, the blame lies wholly at their own door; God, who varies not herein from the Laws for producing the true Species, requires nothing particular at their hands.

SECT. CCXXX. *Nothing is more worthy the Greatness of God, than maintaining the general Laws.*

THIS Circumstance, *That Monsters are purely the Effects of a general Providence,* deprives those of all shadow of Excuse, who commit Acts of Idolatry on the sight of a monstrous Production. For 'twere impertinent and extreme silly to say, that God, who foresaw that the Birth of Monsters might prompt Men to Idolatry, shou'd have prevented it; because nothing were more unworthy of a general Cause, which puts all others in action by a simple and uniform Law, than violating this Law at every turn, to prevent the Surmizes and Superstitions which weak and ignorant Men may run into. Nothing gives a higher Idea of a Prince than seeing him, when once he has enacted wholesom Laws, maintain 'em with vigor towards all and against all, without allowing the least Restriction on the interested Recommendations of a Favorite, or out of regard to any particular Person. And of all the things apt to throw a State into utter Confusion, that which compasses the Point most effectually, is undoubtedly the dispensing with establish'd Laws, changing, clipping, stretching and cramping 'em, according as the private Views of Persons or Partys find their account in such Alterations. You must needs have read how the * Congregation of Cardinals and Bishops, which drew up the Project of Reforma-

* See Father Paul's *Hist. Coun. Trent*, l. i. ad An. 1537.

tion a little before the Council of *Trent*, represented to *Paul III.* That the Facility of the Popes his Predecessors, in hearkning to the Counsels of Flattery, and departing from the Canons, was the great Source from which, as from the *Trojan Horse*, all those Abuses sprung which laid the Church waste. A Remonstrance was giv'n in to Pope *Innocent V.* some Ages before, That the *Non obstantibus* by which all the Laws were dispens'd with, was a Deluge of Inconstancy, a Breach of Faith, and an Obstacle to the Tranquillity of Christendom. 'Tis manifest besides, that the necessity a Legislature is under of mending its Laws by Explanations, Interpretations, Insertions of Clauses, and sometimes a downright Repeal, supposes a narrowness of Understanding, incapable of foreseeing the Inconveniences which must arise in the Execution of these Laws. The longer a Law subsists without Alteration, the more it discovers the great Capacity, and distant Views of the Legislator; whence that Saying of the *Italians* to express a consummate Prudence, *Capo da far Statuti.*

SECT. CCXXXI. *A Reflection on the Unreasonableness of those who murmur at the Prosperity of the Wicked.*

HEREUPON I shall make no scruple to say, that they who are stagger'd at the Prosperity of the Wicked, have very little meditated on the Nature of God, and that they contract the Administration of a Cause which governs the Universe, to the Size of a Providence purely Subaltern; which betrays a Littleness of Mind. What!

wou'd they have Almighty God, after he has created some Causes free, and others necessary, by an Intermixture admirably fitted for manifesting the Wonders of his infinite Wisdom, establish Laws agreeable to the Nature of those free Causes; yet so little fix'd, that the first Fit of Spleen or ill Humor in any one, might intirely subvert 'em to the destruction of human Liberty in general? The Governor of a small Town must expose himself to contempt, if he chang'd his Rules and Orders, as often as any of the Corporation thought fit to grumble: And shall God, whose Laws are calculated for so general a Design, that perhaps what we see of the Universe is only an Underplot in the great Action, be oblig'd to derogate from these Laws, because they don't hit one Man's fancy to day, and another's to morrow; because at one time a superstitious Votary, falsely imagining that a Monster presages a Reverse in human Affairs, passes from his erroneous Opinion to the offering a wicked Sacrifice; at another time, a good Soul perhaps, but which do's not prize Virtue so much as to think the want of it its own Punishment, is offended to see a wicked Man grow Rich, and enjoy a good State of Health? Is it possible to form a falser Idea of a general Providence? And since all are agreed, this Law of Nature, *The Strong shall prevail o'er the Weak*, is wisely ordain'd, and that 'twere ridiculous to expect when a Stone hits and breaks a Looking-glass, which was the Owner's delight, God shou'd dispense with his Laws to spare the Man such an Affliction; must not we allow it's equally ridiculous to expect God shou'd dispense with the same Law, to prevent a Villain's enriching himself by
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the Spoils of an honest Man? The more a Villain sets himself above the Rules of Honor and Conscience, the more he surpasses an honest Man in Power; so that if he takes this good Man in hand, he must by the Course of Nature ruin him: And if both be employ'd in the Customs or Excise, the wicked Man must by the same Course of Nature grow much richer than the Man of Conscience, as surely as a fierce Fire shall consume more Fuel than dying Embers. They who wou'd have the wicked Man always sickly, are sometimes as unreasonable as they who wou'd have a Stone hit a Glass without breaking it; for as his Organs are form'd, neither the Nourishment he takes in, nor the Air he breathes, are capable of doing the least prejudice to his Health. So that they who murmur at his good Complexion, find fault with God's not violating establish'd Laws: Wherein they are so much the more unreasonable, that by a Combination and Chain of Effects, which only infinite Wisdom is capable of ordering, it often happens that the ordinary Course of Nature brings on the Chastisement of Sinners.

SECT. CCXXXII. *The Difference between Miracles and Natural Effects, with respect to us.*

THE Design of all this is only, Sir, to shew you, that tho Men abuse the Blessings of Nature to wicked Purposes, either thro Weakness or Malice, yet God may, without derogating in the least from his Wisdom, Justice or Goodness, inviolably maintain the Course of natural Laws. If he sometime suspend 'em in favor of Man, 'tis

pure Grace, pure Mercy. But the Case is not the same with respect to Miracles; for as these are an interruption of the Order which God has establish'd in Nature, our Reason conceives not how he shou'd work Miracles, when he foresees they are likely to draw Men into the Snare of Idolatry. Common Sense leads to this Thought; that God do's no Violence to second Causes, unless to manifest his Glory in the Salvation of those who are converted, and the just Punishment of those who reject such Marks of his extraordinary Grace. It looks as if he never had recourse to Miracles, but from an Excess of Love for us, moving him to the use of Means, much more affecting with regard to Men than all his Works of Nature, or all his ordinary Providences; and only when he sees that these are not of sufficient Efficacy to uphold their Faith, and rescue 'em from Perdition. Besides, 'tis God alone who works every Miracle, without regard to the Demand or Disposition of second Causes: Nothing determines him here, as in natural Effects, to produce those of one kind rather than another. It seems then, I. That his Goodness shou'd ever move him to chuse such as are fittest to confirm the Truth, and confound Falshood; that Men who are not converted by these means, might only blame the hardness of their own Heart. II. That his Holiness shou'd never suffer him to make choice of such Miracles as are infinitely more likely to favor Idolatry than the true Religion; to excuse Sinners, than render 'em inexcusable.

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SECT. CCXXXIII. *That the Characters of true Miracles belong not to Comets.*

I Find the first Character in the Miracles of *Moses*, of *CHRIST*, and his Apostles, &c. and the second in Comets; because, as has been observ'd, the natural and rightful Effect of Comets, supposing God had form'd 'em by an extraordinary Power to intimidate the Earth, must be engaging the *Jews* to a stricter Obedience of the Law of *Moses*, and all the Nations of the World beside to more Zeal in the abominable Worship of their false Gods: So that a Comet, for one Act of true Piety, must always produce a thousand Acts of Idolatry. Let no one pretend that the Comet's proper Effect was, the converting Pagans to the true Religion; for once more I insist, this was the business of another sort of Miracles: The Comet was to introduce no change in the ordinary Religion, nor make Men comprehend any more, than just that the God each People ador'd was displeas'd, and that 'twas necessary to appease by the vigorous Practice of all the Ceremonys in vogue, or by establishing perhaps some new Feast in honor of the Divinity.

As to the Plea of Excuse herein, 'tis notoriously evident. For if God miraculously produces Comets to warn Men, that unless they appease his Wrath, he purposes to afflict 'em with dreadful Calamitys; all those Nations, who at the sight of Comets have redoubled their Devotions, have prostrated themselves at the Feet of the Altars, have shed the Blood of infinite Victims, have rais'd and dedicated new Temples: All these, I say,

have answer'd the Intention of God as much as cou'd be expected at their hands. And when the Question shall be ask'd 'em, Why this profusion of Sacrifices? they may answer, Because Heaven signify'd by extraordinary Blazes, 'twas expected we shou'd be more Devout than ordinary.

SECT. CCXXXIV. *Whether God dispens'd Good and Evil to the Pagans, with a Design of converting 'em.*

I Must desire you, Sir, to have a special regard to the Distinction I make between Effects of Nature, and the miraculous Works of God; for on this depends the Solution of a Difficulty, which naturally presents, against the Doctrine I have advanc'd. There's no one who is not capable of objecting, It follows from my Doctrine, that God cou'd never awaken Idolaters by the Scourges of his Wrath, nor afford 'em any Marks of his Bounty: because if they'l believe me, the Blessings and Curses of God were only capable of rendring Infidels more impious, or more superstitious; more impious if they quickned not their Zeal for the false Gods; and more superstitious if they did. 'Tis notwithstanding most true, that God has in all Ages made Idolaters feel the Effects of his Indignation, and often expos'd 'em to Pestilence, War and Famine, as the just Punishments of their Sins. It farther appears from the express Declaration of St. Paul *, That *He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness*; and that Men ought to have

* Acts 14. 17.

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consider'd, * *That the Goodness of God leadeth them to Repentance.*

Here's undoubtedly an Objection which opens a large Field for Reasoning: I freely quit it to those who have a mind to shew themselves, and expect you'll not lose such an opportunity of signaling your profound Skill in Theology. Mean time I content my self with laying down this Position, That all the Good or Evil which God dispens'd to the Pagans, was in the Order of his General Providence, and an uninterrupted Consequence of the Laws of the Communication of Motion. If you've read *P. Malebranche's* late Treatise of *Nature and Grace*, you must have seen that the Events which spring from the Execution of the general Laws of Nature, are not the Object of any particular Will in God. Whence it follows, that God afflicted not the antient Pagans with War or Pestilence by a particular Dispensation, but only as they offer'd from a Consequence of the general Laws. I'm aware, that when one wills a thing, he wills also whatever is necessarily annex'd to it; and consequently, that God cou'd not will the general Laws, without willing every particular Effect which must necessarily spring from 'em. This I know, Sir; but I know too there are some things which we will, not for their own sake, but purely because annex'd to some others; in which Case it may justly be said, we don't will 'em by a direct and particular Will. If it be lawful to make a Judgment of the Ways of God, we may assert, he do's not will all Events on the account of their own intrinsic Perfection,

* Rom. 2. 4.

but as they depend on the general Laws which he has chosen for the Rule of his Operations. No question, when God determin'd to act from without, he made choice of a Rule to act by, worthy a Being of absolute Perfection; that's to say, a Rule infinitely simple and uniform, yet infinitely copious. One may even suppose, that the Simplicity and Uniformity of one manner of Acting, joyn'd to an infinite Fecundity, appear'd preferable in his sight (tho some superfluous Events might result from it) to a more compounded and regular manner of acting. Nothing's more useful than this Supposition, for resolving a thousand Difficultys rais'd against a Divine Providence; for which reason we shou'd not presume to condemn, without profoundly examining it all together. Now from this Principle it follows, that God will'd not each Event in particular, only as comprehended in the general Plan he had laid down; and consequently form'd no particular Decree for the desolating an Idolatrous People by Pestilence or Famine. And therefore it's wrong to ask why God was the Author of Events, which render'd Men more sinful: because this is asking why God pursu'd his general Plan (which must needs be infinitely beautiful) by Methods the most simple and uniform; and why by a Complication of Decrees, which must continually thwart and clash with one another, he did not prevent the ill use of Man's free Will. But this Question takes place, on a supposition, that the Pestilence and Famine are produc'd by a Miracle, because in Miracles God manifests a particular Will. One may reasonably ask, how it's possible God shou'd have a particular Will? the result of which could
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only be the rendring Men more guilty; and may even maintain, 'tis impossible he shou'd form Decrees of this nature. You see then, Sir, that Miracles being particular Volitions in God, ought to have an End worthy the Divine Nature; that's to say, ought to lead so clearly and distinctly to the Knowledg of the true God, that there shou'd be no room to doubt whether *Jupiter* were the proper Author of 'em, or the great Creator of Heaven and Earth. Whence it appears, there's a vast difference between those who say God surprizes Men by miraculous Signs, and those who say he surprizes and chastizes 'em by the natural Action of Bodys. One or other will certainly write against *P. Malebranche*, and oblige him to give a farther Explication of his new System, which, in my Opinion, may answer very useful Purposes.

As to those Passages in *St. Paul* which import, that all the Nations of the World, and in all Ages, shar'd in the Effects of God's Bounty, &c. I say, nothing's more true; the Laws of Nature, tho exceeding simple, as I just observ'd, being yet so fruitful, that they produce a thousand Blessings, and every where leave Footsteps of a Cause so-vereignly Perfect. So that there's just ground to condemn those who made not a thorow use of their Reason for coming to the Knowledg of the true God, from the visible Creation. But as the Scriptures never charge those with Folly who perceiv'd not God in a Comet, 'tis idle insisting on these Stars in particular, or making 'em extraordinary Significations of the Divine Will.

SECT. CCXXXV. *New Remarks drawn from the fortuitous Vicissitude of human Affairs, to prove that Comets are not the Cause of succeeding Evils.*

YOU'l do well then, Sir, to maintain that Comets presage in quality of Causes: But if by this means you clear the Methods of Providence, you'l not so easily get your self out of the Briars.

For not to repeat all I have said already concerning the Liberty of Man's Will, and which alone is sufficient to decide the Question between us, how is't possible a Comet shou'd be the Cause of those Wars stir'd up in the World a Year or two after its disappearance? How wou'd you have Comets the Cause of that prodigious diversity of Events which offer in the Course of a long War? Don't we know the intercepting of a Letter sometimes breaks the Measures of a whole Campaign; That the Execution of a single Order an hour too late, destroys a hundred Designs form'd on one another; That the Death of one Man changes the whole Face of Affairs; and that it's sometimes owing to the most fortuitous Nicety in the World, that a Battel was not gain'd, the loss of which is attended with infinite Disasters? How wou'd you have the Atoms of a Comet dancing about in the Air, perform such Wonders? Must not each of 'em have a particular Intelligence to guide it, and each Intelligence act in concert with the rest; to the end, for example, that on advice of Cardinal Richelieu's Death,

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or the Duke of *Bavaria's* disaffection to the House of *Austria*, Orders be distributed to all the Atoms in the North Quarter, to act quite otherwise than they did before on the Bodys and Minds of Men? Do's it not often happen, that two great Princes being in War, each supported by his Allys, several other Princes who stand neuter, tho powerfully solicited to come into the Quarrel, at last make Preparations to declare? But a Battel intervening to the ruin of one of the contending Partys, breaks all their Measures; and changing the Interests of several neighboring Powers, obliges 'em to enter into a new Confederacy. In good earnest, can one pretend this is the work of a Comet, at least without maintaining that the Atoms which acted in *Germany*, to bring the Empire into one Scale, are advis'd by the Atoms which got the Battel fought, that one side is routed, and on this Incident are to apply their whole Influence a different way? And if this be so, is it not bestowing on the Exhalations of Comets, the Liberty we take from the Will of Man? Is it not making 'em the principal Cause of Events, leaving Man the bare Drudgery of acting by their direction and impulse?

SECT. CCXXXVI. *How small are the Causes of some of the greatest Events.*

THESE Difficultys, which confound Judicial Astrology to all intents and purposes, are the more inexplicable, as it's certain the Cause of the greatest Armaments, and most important Wars, is sometimes no more than a Caprice, a Pique, an Amourette, a Nothing; whereas the World
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imagines that Universal Nature has been in travail, for years together, to give the first Movement. They who liken the Actions of Princes to great Rivers, whose Springs are seen by few, but their Course and Progress is visible to all, don't carry the Parallel far enough. They might add, That as these great Rivers, which roll their Currents with so much Majesty in spacious and deep Canals, and whose Inundations sometimes lay whole Provinces waste, are perhaps the smallest Rills in their Source ; so these famous Expeditions, which hold a great part of the World in suspense, and change the Destiny of Nations, are no more than a Trifle in their first Cause.

What do you think, Sir, was the first Spring of the War of *Xerxes* * against *Greece*, the most prodigious Armament that History mentions ?

A Greek Physician, one of the Queen's Domesticks, who, touch'd with a desire to see his native Country, persuaded his Royal Mistress to this Expedition, and the King by her means. What made all the States of *Greece* arm for the Destruction of the flourishing Kingdom of *Priam* ? A Coquet, who falling in League with a beautiful young Prince, got him to run away with her ; and the Credulity of a tender Husband, believing, as those of his Stamp commonly do, that his dear Wife was ravish'd from him by downright Force. Was not a certain King of *Macedon* like to sink under a Civil War, by the Intrigues of a Lady, not brooking, after he knew she was far from Cruel, that he wou'd not lay hold of her Favors ? Is it not generally believ'd, that the Descent of

* See the *Aristippus* of *Mr. Balzac*.

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the *English* on the Isle of *Ré*, was an Expedition of Policy, mingled with a Zeal for Religion, and animated by an Ambition of effacing the Glory of all the Crusades of the antient Kings of *England*? Yet 'twas an Invasion of pure Gallantry, founded on the amorous Dreams of a Court-Favorite *. What pray, Sir, do you think was the first Cause of the *Saracens* Invasion of *Spain*? A Daughter of Count *Julian*, who not thinking it civil to shut her Ears to the Vows of her Prince, gave him as many Marks of mutual Affection as he desir'd. The *Saracens* pouring in afterwards into the very Heart of *France*, till beat back and expel'd by the brave *Charles Martel*, 'twas firmly believ'd the Comet, which appear'd in 726, was the Cause of all these Calamitys. Prodigious Folly! They shou'd have look'd nearer home, to the young *Spanish* Lady's Airs; she was the Comet, describ'd in those words of *Lucan*,
Et terris mutantem regna Cometen. When the *Moors* had push'd their Conquests as far as the *Pyrenees*, by the Handle which she reach'd 'em, 'twas natural that Conquerors shou'd think of extending themselves into the beautifullest Country in the World, without the instigation of a Comet. Read the 21st Dialogue of Mr. *Balzac*, there you'll find a Letter somewhat less respectful than was expected; and the Omission of two or three Syllables, cost above two hundred thousand Men their Lives. *Very humble and most affectionate*, which the Count Duke of *Olivarez* found at the bottom of a Prince's Letter, instead of *Most humble and most obedient*, which he judg'd his due,

* Le P. Moine disc. de L'Hist.

threw him into such a Passion, that tearing it to pieces, he swore the Disrespect shou'd cost that Prince the Ruin of his Dominions.

Did it sute your Gravity to read such a Man as * *Brantome*, you might probably have remark'd this Passage in him, where he tells us, *Francis I.* was prevail'd upon by the single Advice of Admiral *Bonnivet* to pass the Mountains, " Not for any Interest or Service of his Master, " but purely to pay a Visit to a certain great Lady " of *Milan*, the beautifullest of her time, with " whom he had an old Affair, and who gave him " such delight, that he long'd for one tast more " of her. I had this account, continues he, from " another great Lady of those times, the very " Person who first mention'd this Beauty to the " King (her name was *Signora Clerice*, esteem'd " one of the finest Women of *Italy*) and gave " him the Curiosity of making her a Visit, " and lying with her. And here's the principal Cause of this mighty Expedition, which " has been so long a Secret to most People. Thus " one half of the World knows not how the other half lives, for we take a thing by one handle, when we shou'd take it by quite the contrary; so God, who knows all things, mocks " at our Folly. Isn't this a horrible thing, that an Expedition which brought *France* to the very brink of Ruin, by the taking of its King Prisoner, shou'd have for the principal Motive only an amorous Caprice, easily satisfy'd without going so far about ?

* Mem. Tour. 1. Discours. de l' Amiral. de Bonniv.

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What you say is very right, will probably be my Answer. The greatest Enterprizes have sometimes no higher a Cause than a Woman's Spite or Jealousy. Most great Events, good or bad; which are such a Theme of reasoning to your Men of Speculation, and gain so much Praise or Blame to those who are the visible Actors, turn often enough on some small and hidden Springs, mov'd by Envy, Interest, Love, or some other conceal'd Passion. And did we know the naked Truth, we shou'd quickly change our Censure into Apology, and our Praises into Scorn: we shou'd know the most applauded Successes are owing to ill Offices done the General of an Enemy's Army under hand, and that Cardinal *Richelieu* had reason to say, *Six Foot of Ground* (meaning the Intrigues of the Cabinet) *embarrass'd him more than all Europe besides*. But who has told you all this while, that Comets don't thrust in by the by?

SECT. CCXXXVII. *That Comets have no part in exciting the Passions which cause the Diversity of Events.*

WHO told me so? That little good Sense which Nature has afforded me, by the help of which I persuade my self, I. That Comets can't excite all the Passions which diversify Events, unless we ascribe a Gift of Knowledg to all the little Bodys which float in the Air. For if we suppose that a Comet form'd all the Passions which produc'd the War of *Troy*, we must also suppose, that some of these Atoms were charg'd with a Commission, none of the hardest it's true, of inflaming *Paris* with the Love of *Helen*, and *Helen*

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with the Love of *Paris*; that other Atoms took on them the Care of animating the good *Menelaus*, and persuading him, tho nothing in't, that his dear Wife pin'd exceedingly ever since she was bereft of the sight of him, and persisted in an inexorable Cruelty to her Lover; that another Set had Orders to represent to *Agamemnon*, that he ought not to suffer such a blot on his Family, and flatter him with the Hopes of the chief Command; while other Atoms innumerable strol'd about the Villages, and Boroughs, and Citys of *Greece*, to stir up the common People to Arms: That others took a Progress to the Court of King *Priam*, to make the Council o' that side resolve on not restoring *Helen*, and so on. I ask then, whether, to the end the Atoms which were to operate on the Husband of *Helen*, might play their part a-right, it were not necessary they shou'd be appriz'd, with what Success their Comrades had play'd their Game with *Helen*; and if it be possible an Armament, which was so often shifted and chang'd in its Measures, one Party of the Princes governing themselves by the steps of another, and altering their Resolutions as the Conduct of the rest pleas'd or displeas'd 'em, as it ever happens in such Confederacys, cou'd be produc'd by Atoms not mutually communicating the Success of their Influences, and changing their Batterys according to the Circumstances of Time and Place? Now as 'twere ridiculous to ascribe the least Knowledg to the Atoms of a Comet, so 'twere ridiculous to say, they thrust themselves into the Intrigues and Passions from which Events take their Rise; because these Passions spring one from t'other, and are of this kind rather than of that, according to the

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the Circumstances of Time and Place, and the Openings of Affairs. Certain it is, the more Affairs depend on Caprice and Passion, the more impossible it is they shou'd be subject to the Influence of any blind and necessary Cause, such as Comets be.

II. I persuade my self, by the help of that small stock of good Sense which Nature has bestow'd on me, that tho no Comet ever blaz'd in the Heavens, yet the Earth wou'd never be without a deal of Coquetry, Jealousy, Ambition, Envy, Love, Hatred. Let the Lady of Intrigue say then as long as she please, that 'tis her Stars decree her to love, I'm firmly resolv'd not to believe a word on't, and firmly persuaded, that Business wou'd go forward neither more nor less, tho all the Stars in the Firmament were extinguish'd. So, Sir, if you have no other Employment for your Comets than that of inspiring the tender Passions, a Spirit of Intrigue, Flights of Gallantry, Jealousy, Vanity, it is not worth while; once more, nothing were more needless than Comets, we shou'd have Plenty enough of this kind without their Care.

SECT. CCXXXVIII. *That Man needs no Foreign Assistance to be agitated by all sorts of Passions. Instances of the Jewish Superstition.*

I Shall repeat what I said before touching Superstition, That tho the Devil had ne'er meddled, Men had nevertheless fallen into this Vice, so naturally are they inclin'd to it. The Jews, if ever any Nation, ought to be exempt from this

failing, to whom God reveal'd his Will by infallible Oracles, by Prophets, and continual Miracles. Yet they grew * so ridiculously simple as to believe, if the Priest in putting on the Sacerdotal Vestments did not take up each in its Order, the Expiation cou'd have no effect; and that 'twas so essential to the Sacrifice, the officiating Priest shou'd set his bare Foot immediately to the ground, and have no other Habits on than those ordain'd by God, that if he hapned to set his Foot on the Skin of the Victim, or on the Foot of a Stander by, or on any other thing besides, the Expiation was frustrated; and if the Priest had Wounds with Plaisters on 'em, the Sacrifice was null and void by a Nullity of Vestment.

What I say of Superstition, is to be understood of all other Vices; there's a Seed of Corruption in the Soul of Man, which may justly be liken'd to a Coal apply'd to combustible Matter. If this Coal be blown by a violent Wind, 'twill cause a fearful Ravage; but won't fail doing a deal of Mischief, tho' assisted by no Wind at all. All the difference lies here, that its Action spreads farther and swifter when driven by the Wind than when not. The Devil is like a Wind blowing up the Coal of our Concupiscence, and the Cause indeed of its bringing forth evil Fruits sooner and in a larger crop; which yet wou'd thrive and grow apace, purely from the rankness of the Soil. Whence appears the Error of those who imagine, no wicked Thought ever enters into their Heart unless suggested by the Devil, not considering

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there's a principle of Malice within 'em, as the Apostle † St. James justly remarks. This hinders not the Devil's actually tempting us to Evil. However we must insist, the Stars are in no wise the Cause of our Passions. These are only Faints on which Men endeavor to lay their Faults, with as little ground as they ascribe to Fortune that ill Success in their Affairs which proceeds from mere Imprudence.

Aug. 31. 1681.

SECT. CCXXXIX. *Remarks shewing, that to make a Judgment of what shall happen after the Appearance of Comets, there's no need of considering these Stars; and that 'tis sufficient to have an Eye to the Situation of general Affairs, to the Inclinations and Interests of Princes. An Essay of this Method on the Comet of 1618. and that of 1681.*

I Begin to be weary, Sir, and believe I shall soon have done imparting my Reflections to you. I had almost forgot whereabouts I was; and not without recollecting my self a little, have comprehended, that to keep a Connexion between what I'm about to deliver, and what I wrote to you last, it behoves me to set out in this manner.

There's no need of taking it so high, to find the source of that Vanity, Pride, Envy, Avarice, Lust, and the other inordinate Passions which do such a deal of Mischief to human Society. If

there must be Stars to cause 'em, they are undoubtedly those on Earth which the Poets sing so much of, and not those Stars which sparkle in the Heavens. However it be, 'tis certain none are so capable of foretelling Revolutions of State, as they who are acquainted with the Disposition and Genius of Princes, their Interests, Councils, and Forces. A Man of good Sense, who carries his Observations backward, who from History, and his acquaintance with the World, discovers the Springs on which general Affairs do turn, and is besides thorowly instructed in the Maxims and Spirit which govern particular Countrys, shall often make so just a Judgment without the help of the Judicial Art, that all the Astrologers on Earth laying their Heads together to discover what the Stars prognosticate, shall say nothing to the purpose in comparison of him. Which shews it's absolutely useless consulting the Stars to know future Events, and that one shall give a much nearer guess, by consulting the Humor and Inclinations of the People.

SECT. CCXL. *Examples of some Politicians who have foretold Events.*

TWAS undoubtedly by this method Cicero foretold the Overthrow of the Commonwealth of Rome, and Du Vair Keeper of the Seals, the Misfortunes which befel the State of France. Mark how these two Great Men express themselves; 'I comfort my self, *says the first,* with the Testimony of a good Conscience, when I reflect on my having done the greatest Services to my Country, while 'twas in my Pow-

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er; and on my judging constantly of the Publick * Affairs as if I had a Gift of Prophecy, having foreseen the Storm which overthrew the Commonwealth fourteen Years before it happened. Let's hear Mr. d' Vair: 'I was ever of a crazy Constitution, neither my Body nor Mind capable of much fatigue, my Memory extreme treacherous, having of all the Gifts of Nature, only a Sagacity so extraordinary for perceiving the Truth, that I don't think, since I came to Man's Estate, any thing of importance ever befel the State, or the Publick, or my self in particular, which I had not exactly foreseen. I have borrow'd these two Passages from the Learned Mr. † Menage, the Varro of our Age, as P. Maimbourg justly entitles him in his History of the Greek Schism.

But 'tis not on Cicero's single Testimony, that we believe he had such a Talent of Prophecy; we are further assur'd of it by the Account of a famous Roman Historian, who says; 'If one read over the Epistles of Cicero to Pomponius Atticus, he may very well dispense with the Historys of those Times, because he finds in 'em the Passions of the Great so faithfully describ'd, the Failings of the leading Men, and Declension of the Commonwealth, that all the rest is only a natural Consequence, and this Conclusion

* Præclarâ igitur Conscientiâ sustentor, cum cogito me de Republicâ aut meruisse optimè, cum potuerim; aut certè nunquam nisi divinè cogitasse: eâque ipsâ tempestate eversam esse Rempublicam quam ego 14 annis antè prospexeram. *Ad Attic. L. 10. Ep. 4.*

† Observat. sur la Langue Franc. 2 Part. p. 110.

‘ || obvious on the whole, That Prudence is a kind
 ‘ of Divination; since *Cicero* did not only foretel
 ‘ the Events which happen’d in his own Time,
 ‘ but also those which follow’d for a long time af-
 ‘ ter. This Testimony confirms another Passage
 of *Cicero*, where he assures us the Gift of Prophe-
 cy, which he had acquir’d by deep Thought, and
 the Administration of Publick Affairs, had never
 fail’d him ** ; which he cou’d easily prove by
 Examples, but for fear of being suspected of forg-
 ing Predictions on past Events, tho he did not want
 Witnesses enough: ‘ I don’t divine, *says he*, ei-
 ‘ ther by the flight, or by the chirping of Birds,
 ‘ or by any observations contain’d in the Augu-
 ‘ ral Art; I make use of other Signs, which
 ‘ tho perhaps not more infallible, are yet much
 ‘ clearer, and less subject to Illusion: I consider
 ‘ *Cesar’s* Humor and Genius on one hand, and
 ‘ the Nature and Tendency of Civil Wars on the
 ‘ other.

By much the same Rule the famous *Stephen Pas-
 quier* foretold great Tumults in *France*, when ob-
 serving at the opening of the Parliament of *St.
 Martin* in 1587. that the Priest who celebrated

|| Facile existimari possit, prudentiam quodammodò esse
 Divinationem: non enim *Cicero* ea solum quæ vivo se accide-
 runt, futura prædixit, sed etiam quæ nunc usu veniunt præ-
 dixit ut vates. *Corn. Nep. in vitâ Attic.*

** Ne nos quidem nostra Divinatio fallat, quam cum sapien-
 tissimorum virorum monumentis, atque Præceptis, plurimoque,
 ut scis, Doctrinæ studio, tam magno etiam usu tractandæ Reipub-
 licæ, magnæque etiam nostrorum temporum Varietate consecuti
 sumus, cui quidem Divinationi hoc plus confidimus, quod ea
 nos nihil in his tam obscuris rebus, tanquam perturbatis un-
 quam omnino sefellit, &c. *Cicero Epist. Famil. l. 6. Epist. 6.*

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Mas before the Presidents and Counsellors in their Scarlet Gowns and Formalitys, did not present the *Pax* to be kifs'd by 'em, as was ever the custom to do. ' Did || not you take notice, *says he to one of his Friends*, ' the *Pax* was not presented to ' the Members? I'l forfeit my Life, if this do's ' not forebode some extraordinary Evil to *France*; ' so he said, and so it came to pass the same Year. For in the Month of *May* following happen'd the Barricade of *Paris*, which soon after brought on the Death of Mr. *de Guise*, and a Civil War, which prov'd fatal to the Kingdom.

SECT. CCXLI. *A Confutation of Pasquier's Prefage.*

ONE need be no great Conjuror to deliver such a Prediction as this of the Author of the *Review of France*. All things were so dispos'd for a mighty Rupture, that 'twas morally impossible the Kingdom shou'd get off at a cheap rate. So the Priest's mistake was the ground of *Pasquier's* Conjecture, only as falling in with his former Judgment on the present State of Affairs: And I dare say, were he alive at this time, and shou'd see such another Mistake the day of the Parliament's meeting, he'd draw no Prefage from it. So true is it, that the Priest's Conduct was a matter purely casual, and without any meaning: For by what Virtue wou'd you have the omission of an antient Ceremony prefage the Calamitys of *France*? 'Twere necessary for this end that God

thou'd strike the Priest with a Spirit of Blunder, to give *Pasquier* a Revelation of the Dangers of *France*; which 'twere very absurd to maintain, as well because *Pasquier* was not ignorant that the Affairs of *France* had an ill Aspect, as because his foreseeing the approaching Storm was absolutely unprofitable to *France*. For of what use was it to the Kingdom, that *Pasquier* discern'd a Presage in the Priest's Blunder? Of what use to *Pasquier's* Friends, who were the Depositarys of his Conjectures? Of what use to himself? He was highly pleas'd at his own Prediction, he hug'd himself in it; he put his Friends a hundred times in mind, after the Evils came to pass, that he had fairly foretold 'em; he has entertain'd the Republick of Letters with it in a Chapter of his Book: And here's all. A mighty piece of Business, and well worth the pains of interrupting the Course of Nature, and giving the Priest a wandring Spirit, quite different from what he might have had, if not diverted by an extraordinary Providence from thinking of all the Ceremonys of the Day. Yet this is what we must come to: for if the Priest omitted this Ceremony, either because he did not understand his Business, or because he wou'd not conform, or because his Mind was distracted, the natural Succession of Objects carrying him from one Thought to another, so that he had not time to think of presenting the *Pax* to be kiss'd by Messieurs of the Parliament; 'tis plain his Omission was not a Presage in any respect, because God only acting from a direct Purpose, is able to change any Action into a Presage, which in its own Nature is not so. Now common Sense tells us, that were the Finger of God

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God in't, the Prefage had been much clearer and more distinct, and attended with Circumstances rendring it of some real Advantage.

This brings another * Author to my mind, who in his *Political Essays on War and Government*, prophesy'd a Calamity much about the same time with *Pasquier*. The Design of the first Chapter of his Book is to set forth, that *France* was on the brink of a dreadful Revolution, by reason of the enormous Sins which reign'd all over it; Atheism, Irreligion, Blasphemy, Magick, Witchcraft, Luxury, Drunkenness, Impurity, Violence. So far he's right; a Prediction built on such a Foundation, may well come to pass. What he adds, That Comets were already seen, Eclipses, Spectres; dreadful Voices heard in the Air, &c. might seem surprizing in a military Man as he was, did we not know that no Dominion Mankind is under, is so universal as that of Credulity for Prefage. But what he says of its being remark'd by many, that the State was in a Climate-rick Period, and that all the Niches and Spaces contriv'd in the Palace of *Paris* for the Statues of our Kings were full; this, I say, is indeed a common but very childish Superstition. 'Tis probable *La Noue* had ne'er set up for a Prophet, if he had not some of these political Prefages in view, which are much better founded than those of Superstition.

Shou'd you have the curiosity to consult the Passages I cite, you may find perhaps I take this Matter wrong, for I own I refer to it on my bare Memory. But sure I am, my Mistake can't

* *La Noue*.

be so considerable as that of Mr. Naudé, the Man of the most reading in France, † who charges *La Noue* with foretelling great Calamitys, because all the Niches for the Statues of our Kings were observ'd to be full. Which is charging him with alledging as a Reason, what he only mentions at the latter end of the Chapter as a common Remark, and with some sort of Contempt. All Authors abound with Faults of this kind; and since I began to write these Thoughts to you, I have a hundred times had the mortification to drop several Passages, which answer'd my Design the best in the World as they stand in modern Authors; but consulting the Originals, appear'd to be nothing to the purpose.

SECT. CCXLII. 'Twas easy to foresee a mighty War in Europe in 1618.

BY these Political Prefages, 'twas no hard matter to foresee in 1618. that *Europe* shou'd soon be terribly shaken. The Comet which appear'd this Year, was the only thing which pass'd for a plain Prefage; yet this was not the thing which Men shou'd turn their Eyes to. 'Twere as easy to prove from the miserable Rules of Astrology, of which I have given a short account * already, that this Comet might portend Blessings to *Europe* as well as Calamitys. What then must they have an eye to? To the Steps the House of *Austria* was taking to Universal Monarchy, to that insupportable Insolence with which

† Instruēt. sur les Freres de la Rose-croix ch.6. * Sect. 17.
the

the Ministers of the Emperor, and the King of *Spain*, carry'd themselves in all the Courts of *Europe*; and the furious Zeal which this House so unseasonably betray'd for the Extirpation of the new Religions. There was no need of any extraordinary deep Foresight to see, that the neighboring States and Princes wou'd at last lose all Patience, and form powerful Leagues for checking the ambitious Designs of a Family, which aim'd at extending a Tyrannical Dominion, not only over the Persons, but over the Consciences of Men. What room was there to doubt that People wou'd openly oppose Enterprizes so fatal to the publick Liberty? But as this House was still powerful, tho its Infatuation in oppressing the World on the score of Religion, had much weaken'd it; and as they had good Troops and good Generals, capable of executing the Orders of the Courts, while the Princes themselves, surrounded by Crouds of bigotted Monks, ne'er budg'd from their Palaces; twas easy to foresee, that the Efforts of the Powers of *Europe* for preserving their Liberty, might be vigorously repel'd, and consequently a long and bloody War ensue.

SECT. CCXLIII. *The Slowness and Bigotry
in the Conduct of the House of Austria.*

ON one hand 'twas evident the Emperor and King of Spain wou'd employ their utmost Power to oppress Christendom: but 'twas plain on the other, they cou'd ne'er enslave it; because Delays*, and long Deliberations, which have often perform'd a friendly Part on the side of Liberty, lost 'em too many favorable Occasions. You know *Malherbe's* thought on this Subject: *If it be true,* says he in one of his Letters, *that Spain aspires to the Universal Monarchy, I'd advise 'em to pray God that he'd be pleas'd to put off the End of the World to a longer Day.* In effect, considering the way they went about it, weighing and re-weighing the same thing a thousand times over, 'twas impossible they shou'd accomplish those Conquests which they were accus'd of aspiring after. Your great Conquerors have always succeeded better by trusting to Fortune, than by pondering their Enterprizes with the exactest circumspection. For which reason † *Macchiavel* compares Fortune to a Woman; and *Charles V.* observ'd, on the Successes of *Henry II.* she was of the humor of the Female Sex, with whom the youngest Galant is first in favor. The *Florentin* Politician assigns this Reason for't, That the young are more enterprizing, and void of that awful Respect, which is good for nothing in the way of Gallantry. But what-

* *Cethegus semper querebatur de ignaviâ sociorum: illos dubitando & dies prolatando magnas opportunitates corrumpere. Sallust. Bell. Catil.* † In *Tract. de Principe, cap. 25.*

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ever becomes of the Comparison, certain it is, that one never makes a mighty Conqueror without a degree of Rashness; and that nothing promotes the Designs of an ambitious Prince * like Diligence and Activity. So that the too scrupulous and cautious Slowness of the Council of *Spain*, ought to convince all *Europe*, that her design of Universal Monarchy might last a long while.

Besides, the two great Branches of the House of *Austria* are so drawn in by the Promoters of the Inquisition, that 'twas impossible they shou'd e'er have conquer'd *Europe*. This were an Endeavor of joining two Things incompatible in Nature, the being a Conqueror, and a Persecutor; because the People they wou'd fain subdue, fight like Lions, when they find they are to have a Religion forc'd upon 'em which they judg unlawful.

SECT. CCXLIV. *That Conquerors have avoided the Odium of Persecutors.*

THIS undoubtedly is the Reason why *Mahomet*, resolving to found a new Empire and a new Religion at the same time, affected a great † Appearance of Clemency for the Christians; and publish'd, wherever he mov'd his Arms, a Toleration for all sorts of Religions, and particularly the Christian. He inserted this Principle in his Alcoran in very comprehensive Terms: *O Infidels*, says he, *I adore not what you adore, neither do*

* *Natura ferox, vehemens, manu promptus erat, maximum bonum in celeritate putabat. Sallust. ubi supra.*

† *Sir P. Rycaut's State of the Ottoman Emp. l. 2. c. 2.*

you adore what I adore. Observe you your Law, and I'll observe mine. 'Tis pretended he made a Treaty with the Christians, by which he engag'd for himself and his Successors, in the most authentick manner, to protect, and grant 'em considerable Privileges. 'Tis pretended the * Original Contract was found in a Monastery of Mount Carmel. Mr. de Saumaise † thinks the Piece not supposititious, grounding his Opinion on a Passage of *El-Macin* in the Life of *Mahomet*, which mentions his Indulgence for the Christian Religion. But tho we shou'd, with *Grotius*, suspect it a pious Fraud of the Christians, we have proof || enough besides, that this false Prophet granted Christianity a Toleration: And the Chapter of the *Sword* in the *Alcoran*, whatever Violence it allows to be exercis'd on those who won't submit to the Yoke, ordains notwithstanding a Toleration for all who lay down their Arms. And this was observ'd with Humanity enough by the first Successors of *Mahomet*, as |||| *P. Maimbourg* is forc'd to own in his History of the *Iconoclasts*; where he tells us, the *Caliphs* not only allow'd the Christians the free Exercise of their Religion, but also train'd 'em up to the greatest Employments. They made no scruple of conferring the highest Trusts of their Empire on the Father of *St. John Damascene*, and granting 'em to his Son after his death, who was besides made President of the Council, and Governor of the Capital City. Even at this day the Christians are tolerated in *Turky*, and dread the Ar-

* The Contents of this Treaty is to be met with in the 2d Book of Sir P. Rycart's Hist. † Epist. 20. l. 2. || Vid. Hotting. Hist. Orient. l. 2. c. 2. |||| L. 2. ad An. 731.

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tifice much more than the Violences of the Infidels. For * if they speak against the Religion of *Mahomet*, or when drunk promise to turn *Turks*, or debauch a Turkish Woman, there's no choice left 'em between Death and Apostacy. If a Christian turn Turk, all his Family, under the Age of Fourteen, are oblig'd to abjure Christianity. They are allow'd to keep up the Roofs and Cieling of the Churches they have enjoy'd from time immemorial; but not to enlarge 'em or build new, or rebuild those which fall; much as we confine the Hugonots to the Churches they enjoy'd under the Reign of *Harry* the Great. You may call this Persecution if you please; still it's plain, there's more of Artifice than Violence in it: and they who bestir themselves in the Extirpation of Calvinism, can't term it so, without turning their own Accusers. After all, whether the Turks persecute Christianity or no, it's nevertheless true, that *Mahomet* designing to extend his Conquests, took particular care not to scare People on the Article of Religion.

The Conquerors who went before him, were farther still from this Spirit of Persecution than he. 'Twas ne'er seen that *Cyrus*, or *Alexander*, or *Cesar*, inquir'd concerning the Religion of the Nations they subdu'd, or forc'd 'em to abjure, if different from that of their new Lords. When an Officer's Services intitled him to a Promotion, they ne'er examin'd whether he was of the Prince's Religion; they ne'er had a thought of stopping his just Rewards, till such time as he conform'd:

And when pray shou'd they have accomplish'd the Conquest of the World, if amus'd with such little Concerns? You see too how very near the House of *Austria* is now arriv'd at Universal Monarchy. Its great Catholicity makes it, as you see, advance apace. In *Germany* it can scarce defend it self against a handful of Rebels. In *Spain*, as already observ'd *, it has not Authority enough to hinder the few Soldiers it has left, from taking their Arrears out of the Traveler's Purses.

SECT. CCXLV. *How much the House of Austria has weaken'd it self by Persecutions for Religion.*

IF it be true, as Story tells us, that the Elevation of this House has been the Reward of the wonderful Piety of the Emperor *Rodolphus*, who one day meeting a Priest as he carried the Holy Sacrament a foot, made him mount his own Horse, and walk'd after him with great Devotion; one may venture to say, his Posterity have not had the same Returns from that invincible Ardor they have constantly express'd for the Extirpation of Heresy by Fire and Sword. And no wonder: the Action of *Rodolphus* proceeded from a Heart sensibly affected with Religious Zeal; but Persecutions, Gallies, Gibbets, and generally all the ways of Violence employ'd in favor of the good Religion, are the Effects of an intemperate Heat, to which God thinks not fit to give a Blessing. *Fallit te incautum pietas tua*, may justly be apply'd

* *Sell.* 40.

to all possess'd with a Zeal so monstrous, and so fit to confirm those in their Atheism, who run down all Religion with their

Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum. Lucr. l. 1.

I shou'd not declare my self so freely, did I not remember to have heard you condemn those who advise Princes to such wicked Methods for the Extirpation of Heresy. However it be, if the House of *Austria* has been recompens'd for its Zeal against the false Religions, the Recompence, it's plain, has not been in Temporal Blessings, for it has cost 'em the brightest Jewel in their Crowns. I don't mean the Countrys lost by these Methods, that's a Trifle; but the Credit, the Glory, and high Renown, of which they were once in possession. Their present low Ebb makes *Europe* an ampler Reparation of Honor for all the Insults suffer'd from 'em heretofore, than it really desires; and 'tis to the Victorys of *France* it principally owes the satisfaction of being reveng'd, and of seeing the *Spanish* Pride trampled under foot, *Calco Platonis fastum*—the rest you know, and can't disown, that the boundless Ambition of the House of *Austria*, added to its Zeal for establishing the inhuman oppressive Tribunal of the Inquisition in all its Dominions; its Power join'd to the slowness of its Deliberations, might well make People foresee a long and bloody War between the Princes of *Europe* about the time of the Comet's appearance in 1618.

SECT. CCXLVI. *What are the Presages most in vogue at present. Favorable Dispositions for France's extending its Conquests.*

WHAT I advance touching the Year 1618, is confirm'd by the general Talk in the present Juncture. They who have the least Insight into publick Affairs, believe they know enough, to foretel what will happen soon after this Comet of ours: And I observe, that to form their Predictions, they ne'er trouble themselves to examine by what Signs it moves. They consider only the Posture of the general Affairs of *Europe*. And on these in reality we are to form our prophetick Views. And from these, tho no Prodigy or Comet offer'd, one might reasonably conclude, that *Europe* is come to a Period of terrible Revolutions, and that never was a more favorable Conjunction for mighty Conquests.

I. On one hand we see *France* govern'd by a Prince, all whose Actions are perform'd with equal Degrees of Conduct and Courage, with an Ascendant so fortunate, and a World so highly preposess'd in his Favor, that 'tis taken for granted he attempts nothing without having concerted all the Measures which must render the Enterprize infallible; and hence it is that his Neighbors scarce think of defending themselves. The Name of the King is a *Medusa's* Head, which turns all his Enemies into Statues: He overcomes by depriving 'em of the Courage to resist. I shall say more on this Head anon.

SECT.

SECT. CCXLVII. *A Detail of the Circumstances in favor of France.*

II. **B**ESIDE this mighty Prepossession, which alone is equal to an Army of a hundred thousand Men, the King has a great many Troops extremely well disciplin'd, and accustom'd to Victory; many excellent Generals, equally zealous of their Master's Glory, and capable of the greatest Enterprizes. He has a vast Number of able Managers, who have the knack of getting Intelligence from all Parts; fine, dextrous, diligent, careless, menacing, pliable to Occasions, skilful in sowing Divisions, Suspicions, Jealousys on the Right-hand and on the Left, in giving the best Turn to things; in a word, in lulling Princes to a profound Sleep. Wou'd you know 'em better by their Practice? read the Contrivance of *Sybilla* in *Virgil*. The Passage is somewhat of the longest, but very bright. One wou'd think *Virgil*, when he wrote it, had our Triple Alliance in view, as it stands Centry to the *Spanish* Dominions.

* ————— *In his Den they found
The triple Porter of the Stygian Sound,
Grim Cerberus; who soon began to rear
His crested Snakes, and arm'd his bristling Hair.*

* Cerberus hæc ingens latrata regna trifauci
Personat, adverso recubans immanis in Antro.
Cui vates horrere videns jam colla co'ubris,
Melle soparatom atque objectis frugibus offam
Objicit. Ille fame rabiâ tria guttura pandens,
Corripit objectam, atque immania terga resolvit
Fusus humi, totoque ingens extenditur Antro.
Occupat Æneas aditum Custode sepulto. *Æneid. l. 6.*

But prudent Sybil had before prepar'd
 A Sop, in Hony steep'd, to charm the Guard;
 Which mix'd with pow'rful Drugs, she cast before
 His greedy grinning Jaws just op'd to roar:
 With three enormous Mouths he gapes; and straight,
 With Hunger press'd, devours the pleasing Bait.
 Long Draughts of Sleep his monstrous Limbs enslave;
 He reels, and falling fills the spacious Cave.
 The Keeper charm'd, the Chief without delay
 Pass'd on, —————

Dryd. Vir. p. 429.

III. As for Mony, that Sinew of War which compasses every Point, and finds no Fortrefs impregnable, his Majesty has more to spare than all his Neighbors together, without reckoning in the Felicity of having Ministers inexhaustible in new Ways and Means, and Subjects of inexhaustible Patience.

IV. Not to forget our *French* Ladys in all the Courts of *Europe*, which is no inconsiderable advantage: for what can't they bring about, having naturally a World of Charms, insinuating with great Address into the deepest Recesses of the Soul, esteeming it a Glory to be serviceable to their Country, train'd early to the Arts of Intrigue, and corresponding with the Ministers of *France* at pleasure? They who know Mr. *Mezeray's* Remark in the Life of *Harry IV.* That the Intrigues between the Ladys and Lords of the *French* Court, * had brought about the greatest Events in the Court of *France* ever since the Reign of Fran-

* *Abrege Chronol.* ad An. 1605.

cis I. must needs have a high Opinion of our *French* Ladys Politicks. This perhaps is the ground of some Peoples saying, It's more the Interest of our Kings to have Daughters than Sons; because by marrying the Princesses out of the Kingdom, we make advantageous Alliances, and are sure of Creatures in high Credit among our Neighbors. Whence they are often call'd Victims of State, sacrific'd against their real Inclinations: but they soon forget this small Violence, and toil for their Country's Good.

V. Add to this the many Advantages which concur in the King's own Person. He's at an Age in which the Powers of Body and Mind, Courage and Prudence, are in a just Equilibrium. A Prince whose Character comprehends all the Qualitys of *Alexander* and *Philip*, temper'd and corrected one by t'other. Instead of the false Bravery of *Alexander*, he's possess'd of that Spirit of Negotiation peculiar to *Philip*; and to the Mysterys of the Cabinet, in which *Philip* excel'd, adds all that can be counted true Courage in *Alexander*. For as to that Delicacy which allow'd him not to surprize an Enemy, 'tis an Excess a Hero may well depart from without tarnishing the Lustre of his Glory. 'Tis stretching the Notion of Bravery too far, not to refuse the advantage of a dark Night for gaining a decisive Victory. 'Tis pure Vanity to imagine, that not giving an Enemy time to make a vigorous Defence, diminishes the Merit of a Triumph. Our Hero is above these airy Refinements. When he designs to besiege a Town in *Flanders*, he marches towards *Lorain*; and wou'd be very sorry if his Enemys penetrating the design, shou'd grow saucy on their be-

ing sufficiently provided. This shews, Men steer to Glory by quite contrary Paths. A Conqueror, who gave his Enemy timely notice that he design'd to besiege such a Fortrefs, and yet shou'd take it, wou'd be prodigiously prais'd. *Alexander's* * so much admir'd Answer to *Polypercon*, shews this. When our King takes a Town, after he has done his utmost Endeavors to conceal the intended Siege, he's prodigiously prais'd too. He's daily † extol'd for his Skill in concealing a premeditated War under the appearance of Diversions or Progresses; That the Review of *Vincennes* was a Preparation for the War of *Flanders*, and that the Enterprize on the *Franche-Comté* had only the Air of a Progress to *Burgundy*. Every one knows the Device on this occasion, A Sun hid in the Clouds, with these Words:

Tegiturque parat dum fulmina.

This last is much the surest way to Victory. Let's agree then, that the King joining to the Character of *Philip* all that's solid in *Alexander's* Courage, is most capable of making great Conquests, and most incapable of destroying the Advantages of Fortune by Acts of Temerity. I add these last Words, because I remember my saying in another place, That Conquerors ought to throw themselves upon Fortune, without consulting the Rules of Prudence. I own, most Conquerors have done so; but as much greater Numbers have

* Q. Curt. l. 4. c. 13.
3 Entret.

† Entret. Ariste. & Eugene.

miscarry'd by running on madly : the safest way is to join the Maxims of Prudence to a Spirit of Bravery.

This however is not sufficient ground to conclude, the Period for great Conquests is yet at hand. 'Twere farther necessary, that *Europe* be in no Condition to resist the King's mighty Power: For, as I already observ'd, *Cyrus* and *Alexander* might have struggled many a year in one Province. Great Conquests are then made, when a mighty Warrior, provided with all necessary Advantages, meets with no one who gives him considerable opposition. When he's to dispute the ground Inch by Inch, and after taking one Town, must sit down before another within a League of it, he makes little progress in twenty years War. 'Tis doing business, when after striking a Consternation far and near, People come posting three or four days Journey with the Keys of their Citys.

SECT. CCXLVIII. *A Thought on the present State of Europe.*

LET's consider *Europe* then as it stands at present, under an infinite Number of Sovereigns, or such as wou'd be thought so. We shall find some of 'em, who not having sufficient means to support their Dignity, dare not resolve on any vigorous Measures, for fear of losing their Pension. We shall find others sunk in sensual Pleasures, and who place their whole Glory in the soft Embraces of a Mistress: Some who sell off Branches of their Revenues to go pass a Carnival at *Venice*, void of every Thought of what's truly Great, and dead to a Sense of Glory: Others bow'd

bow'd down by the Yoke of senseless Superstition, and Slaves to some ignorant Monk or Friar; whilst others are restrain'd by the Danger of being the first devour'd, if they shou'd offer to stir. They who have Capacity and Courage enough to make a Stand, have not the Forces at command which they cou'd wish for.

VII. I meet with Frenchmen, who to all I have said, add further, That our Neighbors admiring the great Qualities of our Monarch, aspire to the Honor of being in the Number of his Subjects; and I have read so much, in I don't know how many Pamphlets publish'd by Authority. I have pass'd thro the Places which will be the first conquer'd, and observ'd in 'em all a horrible Dread of the *French* Domination, which they look on as a dismal Prospect opening upon 'em for the Chastisement of their Sins. *Nothing's more agreeable,* say they in those places, *than the French Nation, when you only travel among 'em; but 'tis a dreadful thing to fall into their hands when they come among you as Conquerors. They insult, they pillage; they are the Terror of Mothers and Husbands; they fill all Places with Offices and Taxes as vexatious as the very Dragoons, &c.* I answer'd 'em, They idoliz'd their imaginary Liberty; and that taking one thing with another, they were greater Slaves than we: but they'd not hear a word on't. So let's not reckon the Ambition of becoming *French* Subjects, in the number of the favorable Dispositions we are searching after.

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SECT. CCXLIX. *How Republicks in antient Times mortify'd the Monarchys.*

VIII. **T**HEY who say the King will only have to deal with Republicks, are partly in the right; for properly speaking, I know no Kingly form of Government about us except *Spain*, from whence undoubtedly no Opposition will be made. But they're mistaken in imagining Kings have nothing to apprehend from a Republican State. For who knows not that the Commonwealth of *Rome* was the Scourge of Monarchs, and that crown'd Heads were never so mortify'd as by this Republick, exposing 'em for a May-game to the People during the Ceremonys of their Triumphs; casting 'em in Chains and in Prisons; and pretending a private Citizen of *Rome*, cloth'd with the Consular Dignity, ought to take place of the greatest Monarchs; and that 'twas doing 'em a very great * Honor to confer on 'em the Title of *Friends of the Roman People*? Can there be a greater instance of Haughtiness than the Conduct of *Popilius*, Chief of the Embassy which the *Roman* Senate sent to King *Antiochus* the Great, enjoining him to make Peace with *Ptolomy* King of *Egypt*? This Monarch, one of the powerfulest Princes of *Asia*, reacht the Embassador his hand in the most obliging manner imaginable; the Embassador only

* Pacem illi prius petendam a Pop. Rom. esse quam ut Rex sociusque & amicus appelletur; nominis ejus honorem pro magnis erga se Regum meritis dare Pop. Rom. consueisse. Liv. l. 1. dec. 4.

reacht him the Letters of the Senate. *Antiochus* having read 'em over, promis'd to consider of the matter: *Popilius* admitting no delay, drew a Circle with his Ring about the Monarch, and demanded a positive Answer before he stir'd from the spot. The Prince finding himself hard prest, agreed to the Senate's Proposals; and then the Ambassador offer'd his Hand. * Some time after *Antiochus* sent his Embassadors to *Rome*, to acquaint the Senate he had executed their Orders with as much Exactness as tho' 'twere an Order of his Gods. What do you think of *Greece*, tho' not one intire Republick like *Rome*, but a knot of several small Commonwealths, jealous of one another, and torn to pieces by a thousand Factions? Yet *Greece* in this condition foil'd the mighty Empire of the *Persians*, and cover'd it with Shame and Infamy; and after having destroy'd their vast Armys, transported into *Europe* to subdue its State, carry'd the War into *Asia*, and made great Conquests on 'em. The powerful King *Darius*, after the Misfortune of hearing the *Athenians* had burnt the Capital City of *Lydia*, where his Royal Brother kept his Residence, and ordering his Page to put him every Morning in mind of this Affront, had not he the Mortification not only to die unreveng'd, but even much worse treated in the Plains of *Marathon*? *France* therefore is not secure of finding little Opposition on the account of its being furrounded only by Republicks, but rather because the neighboring

* Valer. Maxim. lib. 6. cap. 4. Velleius Patercul. lib. 1. Liv. l. 45.

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States are neither Monarchys nor Republicks. They live under certain mix'd Forms of Government, extremely favorable to the King's Designs; because when that part in 'em which is Monarchical will have things one way, the part which is Democratical will have 'em another.

Every one knows, that the King of *England* quitted the Triple Alliance in 1672. to the great Grief of his Subjects; and after two Campagns against *Holland*, in which the *English* got nothing but Blows, saw himself forc'd to a Peace by the Murmurs of his People. What did this King do to be reveng'd of his Parliament? He ne'er wou'd break with *France*, whatever Instances his Subjects made, representing the Kingdom and Church of *England* in apparent danger, unless a check were put to the Growth of *France*, by a more vigorous Opposition than that of the Allys. He laugh'd at their Remonstrances, and dissolv'd 'em in anger. At last he seem'd resolv'd on a Rupture in 1678. and then the Republican Party wou'd not come into it, apprehending that under color of a formidable Preparation for the War against *France*, he might attempt the establishing Popery and Arbitrary Power in the three Kingdoms. This Division, which in all appearance will be a source of endless Conspiracy and Cabal, since Religion, the great Engine for moving the Populace, is concern'd, will be exceeding favorable at long run to the Designs which *France* may form; and has not been unserviceable to the concluding the Treaty of *Nimeguen*, so shameful to the Confederates, and so glorious to our Nation, that 'twere hard to parallel it in Story.

SECT. CCL. *The Advantages of the Peace of Nimeguen to France.*

THE King gave the Peace there without receding from one Article of the Project he had order'd to be printed several Months before; whereas the usual way was insisting on a thousand points in hopes of obtaining one. He took care to have every Foot restor'd to the *Swede* which he had lost in the Scuffle, and left *Germany* the regret of not being able to mortify a Prince, who had sustain'd our Interests with so high a hand. By this he let those Princes of the Empire understand, who might one day have an Inclination to enter into his Alliance, that they might with Impunity. What the Elector of *Brandenburg* had conquer'd in *Pomerania*, he wrested out of his hands with so much scorn, as let all *Europe* perceive the Glory of this Elector was no way agreeable to the principal crown'd Heads of *Germany*, which, if well improv'd, might answer several good Purposes. In short, he forc'd the Allys to conclude each a separate Peace, which so imbitter'd 'em against one another, that they mutually wish'd each other at the Devil. To this day some of 'em han't forgot their Resentments, but are more inclin'd to side with *France* than against it; Spleen carrying it manifestly against their true Interest. By this one sees how much it's for the King's Advantage to have Neighbors which are neither Republicks, nor Monarchys, tho some among 'em give themselves a more Monarchical Air than that of King.

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SECT. CCLI. *A Reflection on the Form of Government in Germany.*

I Shall never forget the Humor of a Lawyer of your Acquaintance, who fell into a strange Passion one day at the Abuse of the word *Empire*, as apply'd to *Germany*; and certain it is, that never Word was more unfortunately coupled. 'Tis apparently the most monstrous Constitution now on Earth, as Mr. *Puffendorf* has plainly prov'd under the Name of *Monzambanus*; and when I consider it has for all this subsisted a long time under an innumerable Multitude of Sovereign Princes, not yet agreed about Place and Precedence, and who postpone Debates of greatest Importance to the publick Welfare, to fraction the part which each Deputy is to have in each Affair; when I reflect on their Disputes, and the long and immortal Deliberations of the Diet of *Ratisbon*, I'm convinc'd Pope * *Urban VIII.* was not altogether wrong in saying, *That the World in a great measure govern'd it self.* I mean, in spite of all that Men can do to ruin their Affairs, there's notwithstanding a superior Providence which † directs 'em. Have you never heard this Quibble, Sir, *That while the French are making*

* A dominare non bisogna altrimente tanto ingegno, perche il Mondo si governa in cierta maniera da se stesso. *Mr. Le Vayer lettre 140.*

† Scilicet est aliquid quod nos cogatque regatque Majus, & in proprias ducat mortalia leges.

Manil. Astron. l. 4.

good cheer on the Rhine, and the Turks in Hungary, the Germans are at their Diet at Ratisbon? The meaning's very just, and sad was the Experience on't during the last War between the Emperor and Turk. *Neuhausel* was taken in the first place, the Infidels had ravag'd several Provinces; his Imperial Majesty had quitted the City of *Vien-enna*, to save himself at *Lints* with all his most valuable Effects and the publick Registers: All this, I say, was already over and past, while nothing past at *Ratisbon* but Disputes of no moment, Umbrages, Jealousys, and mere Formalitys, without any other Fruits of their many Deliberations, than their departing from the Diet, more divided and more unresolv'd than when they met.

SECT. CCLII. *The Inclination of the Jesuits to the Interests of France.*

IX: **A**MONG the many Advantages on the side of *France*, we likewise reckon that Devotion which the Jesuits express for its Interests. While *Spain* was the most renown'd Power of *Europe*, the Jesuits were all *Spaniards*, those born at *Paris* or at *Rome*, as well as those born in *Old Castile*. Ever since the Declension of the House of *Austria*, and the Prosperity of *Lewis* the Great, they are all *French*; at *Rome*, at *Vien-enna*, at *Madrid*, as well as in the College of *Clermont*. In those Days the Libertys of the *Gallican* Church appear'd not to them well founded: they never left writing for the Rights of the Pope against those of our Kings. One might fill a Library with the Defences compos'd by the Society, against which the Parliament of *Paris*, and the
Sorbon

Sorbon publish'd Sentences of Condemnation. At present his Majesty has not trustier Pens than theirs in his Differences with the Pope. 'Tis now the Court of *Rome*'s turn to censure the Books of the Reverend Fathers. It seems the King's Prosperity's have afforded 'em new Lights, which all their Librarys were unable to do before; and, like those Edicts which P. *Maimbourg* * says, pour into the Souls of Hugonots a Conviction of the true Religion, have clear'd their Understandings to perceive Truths which they once judg'd incomprehensible. Yet 'twere wrong to accuse 'em of Inconstancy on this score, for 'tis not the Society which changes its Mind, but Fortune which changes its Favorite: And after all, who sees not that this is conforming to the Scriptures †, which allow not our having a continuing City on Earth? Now the King's having gain'd the Jesuits to his side all over *Europe*, is no inconsiderable Advantage. Their Credit runs high in more Courts than one, and by their good Address they may contribute mightily to lay aside all Deliberations opposite to his Majesty's Designs. The Ambition of Lording it in those Places which shall be conquer'd by the *French* Arms, and having a Protector so powerful, and so affectionate as the King, who may make their Order flourish in spite of Enemys, in spite of Jealousys, and maintain it in more Lustre than the Princes who govern at present: This Ambition, I say, is enough to drive 'em into all Intrigues which may be favorable to our Affairs. If we believe the *Chronique Scandaleuse*,

* *Epist. Dedicat. of his Hist. Luther.*

† *Heb. 13. 14.*

they han't been unserviceable in this last War, and perhaps contributed to our Victorys no less than the Activity of our Generals. The World says, they are profound Politicians; and one of the three famous Sermons preach'd on the Beatification of St. Ignatius in 1609. gives this Elogy to the Society, "That it reckons above ten thousand five hundred and eighty Religious, so skill'd in the Art of Government, that even among their Lay Brothers some may be chosen fit to read Lectures to the Chancellors of Grenada at Vailladolid, ay marry and to the whole Privy-Council. And'tis said, their General discoursing one day at Rome with a certain French Nobleman told him, * Look ye, Sir, From this Chamber, From this Chamber, repeating it twice over, I govern not only Paris, but China; not only China, but the whole World; tho no body living can imagine how, or which way. Veda il Signor D. di questa Camera, di questa Camera, io governo non dica Parigi, ma la China; non gia la China, ma tutto il mondo, senza che nissuno sappia, come si fa. Possibly tho, what's said of their Abilitys and mighty Credit, mayn't be all true. There are few things which are not exaggerated.

* See the Morale Pratique des Jesuites, printed at Cologne, 1669. p. 50, 51.

SECT. CCLIII. Of certain Prophecys which promise the King great Conquests.

X. **A**MONG the favorable Dispositions which open the King a way to Universal Monarchy, are reckon'd, in the last place, several Prophecys, which promise the King of *France* the Empire of the World. One of these Prophecys is to be met within the ninth Tome of the Works of *St. Austin*, in the Treatise of *Antichrist*, suppos'd to be written by *St. Austin* himself, or by *Rabanus Maurus* Arch-bishop of *Ments*. We find another in a Commentary on the Revelations, compos'd by *David Pareus* a Protestant Divine, which he says he found in the House of the President of a Collegiate Church in *Germany*. 'Tis an old Tradition among us, that there's an old Tradition among the *Turks*, which threatens the Destruction of their Empire by the *French*. The great Qualitys of our Monarch persuade so strongly, these Prophecys relate to him, that even the * Mathematicians are come into the Notion. Many believe it a kind of Sin to doubt it after the Revelations of the famous *Drabicius*, who has prophesy'd so many strange things against the Emperor, and in favor of *France*. Now great Enterprizes can't possibly be begun under Presages more favorable than Revelation and Promises from on high. Thus every thing seems to invite the King to a new War.

* *Mr. Comiers in his new Doctrine of Comets, printed in 1665.*

SECT. CCLIV. *Pretences which the King might raise, to lay hold of the favorable Dispositions which Fortune offers him.*

I Had one with me t'other Day, who reflecting on all these happy Dispositions, stood amaz'd that the King wou'd not lay hold of 'em. What hinders, says he, his taking in the rest of the *Spanish Low Countrys*, and possessing himself without more Ceremony of what lies convenient to him in *Germany*? Is it that his Majesty wou'd not give the least cause of complaint? But how comes the Blockade then, and the taking of some Places whose Situation render'd 'em the most advantageous for incommoding us in a new War? Whence so many stale Pretensions, on which his Majesty founds a legal Right, first by his Judges, and afterwards by his Soldiers? This they complain of all over *Europe*; and since they will be complaining for complaining sake, better give 'em a good substantial Reason all at once, than so many trifling ones. If the King has no mind they shou'd complain, perhaps he does too much; if he does not value their Complaints, he does too little. Is it that he wou'd not be the first in breaking the Peace of *Nimeguen*, but expects the *Spaniards* shou'd begin? If that be the matter, we shall have the longest Peace that ever was: for the *Spaniards* will swallow a thousand Affronts rather than declare War; well knowing, that the Hostilities of one Campaign wou'd be more fatal than a hundred Décrees of the Chamber of Reunion, or all the Insults by which we endeavor to tire their Patience, and provoke 'em to a Rupture. Is it that
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his Majesty wants a plausible Pretence to declare War against his Neighbors? But here, Sir's, one ready to his hand, and the most specious Pretence in the World. The *Spaniards* make their Complaints in all the Courts of *Europe*, and even publish in their Pamphlets, that *France* has committed several Infractions of the Treaty of *Nimeguen*. This is the most outrageous Injury in Nature. A private Gentleman who's charg'd with violating his Oath, waits not for a critical time to right himself; and all the World commends his seeking Reparation for such an Outrage. By much a stronger Reason, a Prince accus'd of infringing a Peace which he has solemnly sworn, has a right of taking his Revenge by the way of Arms, the only way which Sovereigns can make use of. So that if his Majesty waits only for a reasonable pretence to renew the War, here's one you see at his Service: and as little a Man as I am, I'll engage in two days time to draw up the finest Manifesto in the World, at least much a finer than that in 1672. founded only on the Ingratitude of the *Hollanders*; since it's certain the ungrateful don't wound our Honor near so much as those who give us the Lye. Ingratitude is no doubt an execrable Vice: Yet no Laws, as I remember, have ever declar'd a Punishment for it, except those of the * *Medes*. And to what purpose shou'd there be Laws against the ungrateful, since no one dare take his Remedy without forfeiting the Merit of his Benefit? "He makes himself odious who reproaches kind Offices, of which the Receiver

* Xenoph. Cyrop. l. 1. Seneca de Benef. l. 3. c. 6.

" shou'd never be unmindful, tho the Benefactor
 " shou'd ne'er make * mention of 'em. † The
 " only Punishment of Ingratitude is, its being
 " condemn'd by all the World; the Crime is not
 " acquitted: but as 'twere difficult to ground Ac-
 " tions on a case of an uncertain nature, it's
 " branded with a publick Odium, and stands
 " among the things we refer to an All-see-
 " ing Justice. Yet this hinders not, but Sove-
 reigns who have Rights incomprehensible to the
 rest of Men, may call a neighboring State to ac-
 count for its Ingratitude, as appears by the War
 of 1672. And this being the Case, how much
 more reasonable to revenge the *Spaniards* publick
 Charge of Prevarication against his Majesty, since
 this is an Injury, against which the Laws provide
 a Remedy for private Partys?

SECT. CCLV. *Reasons for not laying hold on
 these favorable Dispositions.*

YOU talk at your ease, reply'd I to my merry
 Blade; you're not to answer in the sight of
 God, either for the Declaration of a War, or
 the Miserys which attend it. But when a Prince,
 fill'd with Piety and the Love of God, meditates

* Odiosum fané genus hominum officia exprobrantium, quæ
 meminisse debet is in quem collata sunt, non commemorare qui
 contulit. *Cicero in Lælio.* † Hoc frequentissimum crimen
 nusquam punitur, ubique improbat. Neque absolvimus il-
 lud, sed cum difficilis esset incertæ rei æstimatio, tantum odio
 damnavimus, & inter ea reliquimus quæ ad vindices Deos mitti-
 mus. *Seneca, Ibid.*

on the Precepts of his Religion, he ne'er has a Thought whether 'twere an easy matter to seize his Neighbor's Dominions, or get this or that Manifesto drawn up, but whether he can go on such an Enterprize with a good Conscience; and concludes it's more his Interest to leave all People in the quiet possession of their Right, than provoke a God who will punish the greatest Kings for the abuse of their Power, in a manner infinitely more severe, * than they punish little Gentlemen who tyrannize over their Vassals.

For this Reason, notwithstanding all the favorable Conjectures which tempt his Majesty to undertake the Conquest of *Europe*, I shou'd not bet ten to one that there will soon be a general War, or that *France* shall have all the Success which Fortune seems to promise. For besides what I just said of the Piety of our Monarch, I make no doubt but his excellent Sense, and insight into History, will inform him of the instability of Fortune. What the *Scythians* represented to *Alexander* is very right; and had not Death snatch'd away this Conqueror in the flower of his Youth, he might perhaps have bin in Circumstances to cry out, O *Scythians*! as *Crasus* cry'd, O *Solon*! Fortune, which has been compar'd to so many things, may in my mind be rightly com-

* Vos quibus Rector maris atque terræ
Jus dedit magnum necis atque vitæ,
Ponite inflatos tumidosque vultus.
Quidquid a vobis minor extimescit
Major hoc vobis Dominus minatur.
Omne sub regno graviore regnum est.

Senec. in Thyest. Act. 3. Sc. ult.

par'd to a smooth smiling Sea, which yet is brewing † Mischief and Tempests at bottom. Fool who trusts it.

*Mène salis placidi vultum, fluctusq; quietos
Ignorare jubes? Mène huic considerare monstro?
Æneam credam quid enim fallacibus Austris,
Et cæli toties deceptus fraude sereni.*

The King we know has not yet been trick'd by Fortune. But so many other great Princes have, who soon or late saw a reverse of their Glory, that the surest way is to venture nothing on fair Appearances. For he who miscarrys, not only runs the hazard of being neither prais'd nor pity'd, but exposes himself to the Lashes of Conscience, to the Murmurs of his own People, and the Insults of Strangers. All Europe with pleasure beheld the ambitious Enterprizes of the House of *Austria* disappointed (I hint at this the oftner, that we might take warning by so fresh an Example). The Victorys of *Gustavus*, the Triumphs of the *French*, the Revolt of *Catalonia*, the Loss of *Portugal*, made all the World laugh, and tell 'em aloud, *they richly deserv'd it*. All saw the Growth of the Republick of *Holland* with pleasure, which having given the first shock to this formidable Power, weaken'd it day after day, by its Conquest of several Towns, by several naval Victorys, by its Commerce establish'd in all Parts of the World, by the unparallel'd bravery of the Princes which commanded its Armys,

† Ubi luserunt navigia, ibi sorbentur. *Seneca,*

and the consummate Prudence of the States General. And cou'd it be foreseen that this Republick shou'd one day be the greatest Support of tottering *Spain*, and shou'd make appear that it had not enter'd into War by any Motives of Ambition, but purely to preserve its own Liberty, and a Ballance between the Powers of *Europe*: Cou'd this, I say, be foreseen, I question whether 'twou'd be so kindly taken (but People ne'er give themselves the trouble of so remote a Thought, as where they whose present Prosperity is a Terror, may hereafter find shelter in their Disgrace). And we are seldom lavish of our Applauses to those who are equally ready to sustain or humble the same Power, according as it grows weaker or more formidable. In a word, when People bring Mischiefs on themselves, they are ne'er pity'd; but where unfortunate in a just Defensive, there they have a thousand Sources of Consolation. Why shou'd not we think his Majesty enters often into Reflections of this kind?

Why shou'd not we suppose, he discovers by the strength of his own Judgment, that he ought to be satisfy'd with the Glory he has acquir'd, and not easily hazard it? As the World's made, it always judges of a Hero's Actions by the last he performs. If after gaining several Victoriys, he happens to lose a Battel or two, they talk no more of his Good, they remember only his ill Fortune. The true Reason why *Cesar*, * the more he had ex-

* Non nisi tempore extremo ad dimicandum cunctatior factus est, quo saepius vicisset eo minus experiendos casus opinans, nihilque se tantum acquisiturum victoriâ, quantum auferre calamitas posset. *Suet. in Cas. cap. 60.*

perienc'd the Favours of Fortune, the less was he inclin'd to fight; judging with good Reason, that a new Victory added to all his old, wou'd not do him near so much service, as the loss of one Battel wou'd do him prejudice. It's the business of young Hero's, who have not yet establish'd a Reputation, and of your *bisognosi d'honore*, as the *Italians* call 'em, to seek occasions of signaling themselves; it's their business to make 'em Enemys right or wrong, to make a Parade of their Forces: but when once arriv'd to a high Reputation, how right is it to stop there!

Why may'nt we believe, that his Majesty with all that good Sense of his, and having sufficiently discover'd what his Great Soul and military Prowess is capable of, designs to immortalize himself by Methods wholly new, and in reality infinitely more deserving praise than Victories and Triumphs? These new Methods, this Path to solid Glory, is leaving *Europe* in repose, at a time when he might easily overrun it; this is making a Conquest o'er himself † more glorious than that of Empires, and setting a bright and transcendent Example of Vertue which no Age affords. Now from whom can we expect so rare an Example with so much Justice, as from a King like ours, whom God has distinguish'd by so many miraculous ways? For whom shou'd the Glory of shewing the World the real Difference between a

† *Omni acto triumpho depositus triumphus clarior fuit, adeo spreta in tempore gloria interdum cumulator redit. Liv. l. 2. Dec. 1.*

———Magnum delata potestas
Majorem contempta probat———

Claud.
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King who adores the true God, and Infidel Princes, be reserv'd for all this while, but for him who is eldest Son of the Church, cloth'd by hereditary Right with the glorious Title of *Most Christian*? He shou'd be guided by Reason alone, enlighten'd by Faith; they govern'd by the Instinct of their Passions. But alas! Christian Princes, to the scandal of Christianity, seldom follow any better Principle; and 'tis long, very long since the Christian Religion has produc'd any excellent Patterns: 'twere time it produc'd one truly illustrious. Nothing cou'd be more so, than *Lewis the Great's* renouncing all the Triumphs which Fortune now presents him. Why shou'd not we believe that the King designs to go to Glory by this way? What Blessings, what Praises might he not expect from his Neighbors, from those who are yet unborn, from latest Posterity; if taking no advantage of the Weakness of *Spain*, nor the Partiality of *England*, and the Factions which divide it, nor the Irresolutions of *Germany*, nor the Troubles of *Hungary*, which the *Turks* will surely make their use of; his Majesty shou'd suffer the States of *Europe* to live peaceably all under their own Laws! Thus all the dazzling Thoughts and Turns which our finest Wits have study'd to set forth the Moderation of our invincible Monarch, might be approv'd by the whole World: at present they are only *French* Truths, which our Neighbors don't agree in. We may pretend what we please in *France*, that the Treatys of *Aix la Chapelle* and *Nimeguen*, are the pure Effects of his Majesty's Moderation, who put a stop to the course of his Victorys when no body else cou'd; they'l not allow it, beyond the *Alps*, or beyond the Sea, or beyond

yond the *Rhine*, or beyond the *Pyrenees*. And yet being the Object of Praise in these Foreign Parts, is what shou'd principally be aim'd at; for be a King's Actions what they will, he's always sure of Praises, during Life at least, among his own Vassals. The true Praises of a Prince, are those which his Enemys are forc'd to publish; and therefore Mr. *Balzac* writing to a great Wit of *Holland*, and signifying his esteem for *Frederick Henry* Prince of *Orange*, thought he comprehend-ed all in these few words: *I wish him a Glory his Enemys may be forc'd to allow, and which mayn't be contested him even in the Spanish Historys.*

SECT. CCLVI. *A Reflection on what has been observ'd of certain Prophecys in favour of France.*

AS to the old Traditions, or Prophecys, which 'tis pretended promise the Conquest of the World to one of our Kings, he must have a mean opinion of *Lewis XIV.* who imagines him capable of undertaking the least Affair on such a Motive. The King has too much good Sense not to look on all these pretended Revelations as vain and visionary; and is not ignorant that for one Prince who succeeded by building on such Imaginations, ten have been ingag'd in rash and unfortunate Enterprizes. I remember to have read in the History * of the *Crusades*, that they paid dearly at the Siege of *Jerusalem* for giving the Assault, "upon the Advice

* Hist. de Croisades par le P. Maimbourg. l. 2.

“ of a Hermit who liv'd with the Reputation of
 “ great Sanctity in a Cave of Mount *Olivet*, and
 “ promis'd Victory to the Christians on the part
 “ of God, precisely upon such a Day, tho they
 “ assur'd him they had nothing in readiness for
 “ the Enterprize. But they soon found, as P.
 “ Maimbourg *justly observes*, that in all kind of
 “ Affairs, especially those of War, 'tis dan-
 “ gerous forsaking the Rules of Art and Pru-
 “ dence, blindly to follow the ways of Revela-
 “ tion, which are not much to be rely'd on,
 “ because often false; and tho possibly they
 “ might be true, no one's oblig'd to believe
 “ 'em without invincible Proof. Without this,
 “ we are always oblig'd to follow that Reason
 “ and common Sense which God has given us,
 “ next after his Divine Word, as the Rule of
 “ our Conduct. The shame of being guilty of
 such an Error, in preferring the Visions of a
 poor Hermit to the known Rules of War, made
Godfrey of Bulloigne wiser for the future.

We need not go out of the History of the *Cru-
 sades* for Instances of Prophecys, which have mise-
 rably deceiv'd those who rely'd on 'em; but 'twill
 suffice to consider what hapned to *St. Bernard*.
 This great Man having receiv'd an Order from Pope
Eugenius III. to preach up the 2d *Crusade* in 1145.
 did not fail promising a thousand happy Successes
 to the Princes who shou'd ingage in so holy an Ex-
 pedition. The great Reputation of his Sanctity
 making his Promises consider'd as so many Divine
 Inspirations, was the occasion of more Peoples
 listing for this Voyage to *Jerusalem* than ever were
 known to do before or after. Some will even
 have it, that he confirm'd his Promises by many
 extraor-

extraordinary Miracles. But * *P. Maimbourg* leaves us at full liberty whether we'll believe 'em or no; and 'tis likely, that Part's false, because there ne'er was a more unfortunate Expedition than that which was undertaken upon the mighty hopes given by *St. Bernard*. The poor Knights of the *Crusade* cou'd not forbear complaining † that he had run 'em by his false Predictions on a fatal Precipice. What Answer did he make 'em? 'Tis with great reluctance, Sir, that I open my self on this Subject; however I'll venture for once. Instead of frankly confessing he had been first deceiv'd, he sav'd himself by the pitiful subterfuge of conditional Promises; giving 'em to understand, that when he first foretold the happy Success of the *Crusade*, 'twas to be taken with this necessary Condition, that the Soldiers did not provoke the good God by a Licentiousness of manners. Tell me, Sir, is not this mocking the World, to set up for a Prophet, and foretel what shall never come to pass, without mentioning a syllable of what shall really happen? Either *St. Bernard* shou'd ne'er have pretended to foretel future Events, or he shou'd have foretold the very Disorders into which the Soldiers were like to fall, instead of promising imaginary Victorys which were ne'er to happen. My mentioning this, is principally in answer to those who alledg the Treatise of *Antichrist* inserted in *St. Austin's Works*, and remarkable for a magnificent Prediction in favour of one of our Kings: for if the Prophecys deliver'd by *St. Bernard* were

* Hist. Croisade, l. 3.

† Ibid. l. 4.

no better than Illusions fatal to the Christian Powers, what a folly wou'd it be in us to flatter our selves with the Empire of the World on the Word of *Rabanus Maurus*, or even that of *St. Austin* himself?

But, say they, the *Turks* themselves have a Prophecy, which threatens 'em with the Sword of *France*. Another Dream! 'Tis true, ever since the Tenth Century there has been a Prophecy current among those of the Bishop *Hippolitus*, which assures us, that it is not by the Hands of the *Greeks* that the Infidels are to be destroy'd, but by the *French*. 'Tis true likewise, we owe this Prophecy to *Luitprand* the Wise and Learned Bishop of *Cremona*, in the Relation of his second Embassy to *Constantinople*. 'Tis further very true, that the *Saracens* were marvelously encourag'd by this Prophecy in the Battel which they gain'd in *Sicily* in 963. over the Troops of *Nicephorus* Emperor of *Constantinople*. It's true in the last place, that the *R. P. Maimbourg* *, on whose Credit I take all, says, "There are undoubtedly many Predictions of this kind, and time alone can discover whether they be true; nor can this be, till the *French*, who united as they now are under one of the greatest Princes that ever reign'd, are capable of executing this great Design, are not hinder'd by foreign Wars, and by unjust Leagues, which for their just defence divert 'em (when our Jesuit wrote these Lines) from so glorious an Enterprize. I'm willing to allow

* Hist. du Schisme des Grecs, l. 3.

the truth of all this ; yet I don't allow we ought to take the Prophecy for true.

For, I. it's certain, the Infidels mention'd in this Prophecy, are the *Saracens* and not the *Turks*. The *Turks* were not known to the West in the tenth Century, but 'twas sadly harass'd by the *Saracens* ; and for this Reason some good Souls, to comfort the Christians of those days, promis'd 'em that an Empire founded in the West by a King of *France*, shou'd destroy that Infidel Nation, or promis'd themselves as much by the benefit of an overheated Imagination. Now as the Event has shewn the falseness of this pretty Prophecy, since it's certain the Empire of the *Saracens* was neither destroy'd by the *French*, nor the Emperors of the West, but by the *Turks* and *Tartars* ; who can imagine with any shadow of Reason, that the Prediction shall be accomplish'd in the destruction of the *Ottomans* ? And were not he an errant Fool, who shou'd declare War with the *Port* on the strength of this Promise ?

II. It is not very certain, that the *Turks* have any Prophecy among them, which threatens their Subversion by the *French* : For were it really so, how is't possible those *Greeks* who told Mr. *Spon*, the *Ottomans* had a Prophecy* importing the Overthrow of their Empire by a Nation, *Chryso-genos*, that is with fair Hair, shou'd be ignorant of this other Prophecy so honorable to our Nation ? This was a very favorable occasion for mentioning it : So that Mr. *Spon* taking no notice on't, we have ground to think he heard no-

* Voyage du Levant, Vol. 1. p. 270. de l'impress. de Holl.
thing

thing of it in his Travels in *Turky*; a Presumption, this pretended Prophecy is current only among our own good People in *France*. Besides, it's evident, this fair Nation, so fatal to the *Turk*; cannot be ours. Mr. *Spon* takes it to be the *Muscovite* or *Russian*: he shall have it.

But, say some to me, Tho you're too good a *Frenchman* to wish our carrying the War as far as *Turky*, on the strength of some favourable Prophecys; you'l at least allow *Dabricius* a stanch Prophet, in promising us mighty Conquests in the Empire. I answer, that tho I mean not to imitate our Poets and Orators, who from time immemorial have been urging our Princes to the Conquest of *Constantinople*; yet I can't forbear wishing that our Invincible Monarch wou'd in his own Wisdom think fit to undertake this mighty Work. I only say, 'twere nonsense to reckon upon the pretended Traditions which promise us Success: And as for *Dabricius*, it's plain, that none but the Enemies of *France* can believe, either that she looks on him as a Person divinely inspir'd, or that she's capable of going on any Project to put his Prophecys in execution. For can Men be so Catholick as the King's Privy Council, and believe that a Protestant Minister had receiv'd the Gift of Prophecy from God? Can Men have such a Zeal as the King's Council shews for extirpating Sectarys which disown the Pope, and yet prepare for fulfilling the Prophecys of *Dabricius*, which import, as the World says, that the same King of *France* who's to ruin the House of *Austria*, is to destroy the Pope too Root and Branch? No one can harbor such Thoughts as these with-

Na

out

out making a Judgment very injurious, not only to the King's Inclinations, and to those of his Ministry, but to their Sense of Religion also.

The Protestants themselves are not so generally satisfy'd that *Dabricius* was a Prophet. Nay, many of 'em are persuaded he was a mere Phana-tick, who by too long poring upon some Commentaries on the Prophecys of the Old Testament, and those of the Revelations, actually turn'd his Brain: And having fill'd his Imagination with Scripture Ideas, cou'd look on the Emperors of *Germany* only as so many *Pharaohs*, *Sennacheribs*, *Nebuchadnezzars*, and Servants of the Great Whore, *made drunk with the Wine of the Anger of her Whoredom*; till he came at last to persuade himself, that God had appointed him to give several Princes a special Command to destroy these Persecutors. They who suffer'd under their Persecutions, and imagin'd that Divine Providence wou'd soon or late revenge so barbarous a Conduct, are the likeliest to rely on the Visions of *Dabricius*: Yet these for the most part lay but little stress on 'em, especially since by sad experience they had found he was mistaken, and that he often contradicted himself notoriously, and in a manner not to be reconcil'd but by flying to various Glosses; which make the Incredulous laugh much more, than a frank confession of the Man's Mistakes: for by Glosses of this kind, multiply'd as occasions require, there's no false Prophet but may be fairly brought off. A poor business, Sir, this of Revelations for a Man to put his trust in, were they those of *St. Gertrude*, *St. Hildegarde*; or *St. Bridget*; when you very well know that

Authors

Authors perfectly Catholick *, and Religious to boot, have boldly arraign'd the Prophecys of these Saints, on the most convincing Exceptions. 'Twere a pretty thing indeed, to see *France*, under so wise an Administration as 'tis at present, embark in a War with *Germany* on the Visions of *Drabicius*. Thus the favorable Dispositions pretended to be drawn from Prophecys, are far from persuading me, that we shall soon begin again to conquer.

SECT. CCLVII. *Whether Europe has more Reason to enter into a general Confederacy now than heretofore.*

BEsides, Who has told us that *Europe* will always lie dozing, as she do's at present? I own, tho she has her Fears of *France*, and fancies she spys something, I don't know how, in her Conduct, very much resembling what we have observ'd of the *Spaniards* heretofore; yet all lie close, no one will venture to stand the first Brush: which puts me in mind of the Fable of the Rats and the Cat. This Lethargy is the more surprising, as they can't be ignorant that it's much easier for the King to execute his great and vast Design of Universal Monarchy, than heretofore for the Emperor, and King of *Spain*: all the Strength and Forces of *France* being united under one Head, who goes forth himself with his Armys; is fortunate, brave, politick; without a Power

* Henricus de Haffia Sibyllanus, Franc. Picus Mirandulanus apud M. Delrio, Disq. Magic. l. 4. c. 1. quæst. 3. sect. 4.

to awe him, so formidable as this Kingdom to the *Spaniards* in the time of their good Fortune. These Advantages the House of *Austria* was ever destitute of, either in part or in whole. When almost all its Forces were united in the Person of *Charles V.* a Prince of great Courage and extraordinary Capacity; yet his Dominions lay at such a distance, and so separated, that they cou'd not readily lend one another a helping-hand: and besides, *France* had then a *Francis I.* brave as Steel, who alone cut out as much Work for *Charles* as he cou'd well turn his Hand to. On the other hand, *Soliman*, Emperor of the *Turks*, was a terrible Neighbor to the Hereditary Countrys: And the Protestant Princes of *Germany*, animated by that Transport of Zeal, which is never wanting for a Religion, while piping-hot from the Anvil, were a curst Thorn in *Charles's* Foot. The Case was much worse after the Retreat of this Emperor. His Estates were dismember'd; they who possess'd 'em, liv'd a long time in a kind of misunderstanding, which weakened both Partys: The Distance between *Vienna* and *Madrid*, wou'd not allow their concerting Things with that dispatch which is necessary for great Enterprizes; and between Friends, the Successors of *Charles* were nothing less than Hero's. Yet *Europe* was in a high Ferment, *Europe* form'd Leagues; *Europe* in the end fell upon 'em at such a rate, twitting 'em with their Pride and Ambition, that they brought 'em down to a pretty good Level. And at present, when she looks on the Danger as much greater, she's content to look on. All this I know, Sir; yet I'll lay no Bets on our Conquests. The People are like a
Sea,

Sea, which works terribly after the deepest Calm. One Man is sometimes enough to rouse half the World, and * bring over Fortune to his side.

SECT. CCLVIII. *Whether Leagues are to be fear'd.*

VERY well, says you ; let 'em League on as long as they please ; Leagues are no such Kill-Cows : They are Bodys with a hundred thousand Arms, and which by having too many Heads, have none at all. You know the Apologue of the Turkish Envoy, and the little account he made of Confederate Troops, in comparison of those under one absolute Head. I own, Sir, it's an inestimable Advantage to have an Army commanded by a single Person ; and 'tis a Circumstance very favorable to our King's Designs, which I have not yet taken notice of, That those who oppose him, are only Quota's of Troops commanded by different Persons, with their several private Views, and perhaps opposite Interests. It's well for us, we had such Armys to deal with in the last War ; for had the Allys kept a good Understanding among themselves, we had surely been balk'd, notwithstanding the King's good Conduct, and the Bravery of his Troops. But 'twas the good Fortune of *France*, that they cou'd never set their

* Tantum in uno viro fuit mentis, ut maximi imperii subversus, & rursus recepti Auctor esset ; & undè stetisset eò se victoria transferret, fieretque cum eo mira quædam fortunæ inclinatio. *Justin. lib. 5. de Alcibiade.*

Horses together. Their Councils of War were so many pitch'd Battels. They were so many Defiances, reciprocal Complaints, Jealousys, Maggots. Some wou'd much rather lose a Battel, than see it gain'd by a General they hated. Others, to merit the continuance of their Pensions, gave the worst Advice they cou'd. We needed all this, Sir, towards having that Success which attended us: For, as I have often already observ'd, the Victorys one Party gains over t'other, can never be of much Consequence, unless there be a great Disproportion between their Forces. Now what makes this Disproportion, is not always that of greater Numbers, but greater Oversights committed of one side than t'other. This made us an Overmatch for the Allys; the variety of their Interests and Sentiments, leading 'em into infinite Oversights, while the King administering his own Affairs with a superior Understanding, committed none. Twice or thrice were they guilty of that great and capital Error, which *Hannibal's* * reproach'd with, of not knowing how to make the most of a Victory.

* Florus, lib. 2. cap. 6.

SECT. CCLIX. *Overights of the Allies during the last War.*

IN Effect, Mr. *de Montecuculi* in 1673. gain'd such an Advantage over Mr. *de Turenne* without striking a Stroke, that the Court of *France* thought it self very happy in coming off with the Loss of the Country of *Cologne*, and of most of the Places which we held in *Holland*: so well they knew it had been an easy matter to do us much more mischief. It happen'd luckily for our Affairs, that the *Germans*, a little over-hasty in going into Winter-Quarters in their own Country, refus'd to second the Ardor and good Judgment of the Prince of *Orange*, who had so much contributed to the Taking of *Bonn*. Two Years after, Mr. *de Montecuculi* having had the Glory of seeing Mr. *Turenne's* Genius truckle to his, and of mauling our Troops in their Retreat, cou'd not push his Advantage, either because Old Age had render'd him unactive, or that some civiliz'd Persons in the Court of *Vienna* had us in their Thoughts. However it be, he contented himself with refreshing his Army on this side the *Rhine*, while Mr. the Prince acted a Part very disagreeable to a Genius so full of Fire, being forc'd to lie behind Retrenchments, and with the Ruins of an Army, behold the Imperialists walking about, and taking their Pleasure in *Alsace*: There was a farther Oversight committed by those who beat Mr. *de Crequi* at *Consfabrik*; for instead of advancing on our Frontiers, while all was in Consternation, they amus'd themselves the rest of

the Campaign with the re-taking of a * Town we cou'd very well spare 'em. The *French* made no such Blunders. So we are not to wonder if the Affairs of the Allys went but ill; they were baffled by their own unhappy Conduct, while the ill Conduct of their Enemy made 'em not the least amends. Which yet generally happens in most Military Operations, as Mr. *de la Rochefoucault* † justly observes upon our last Civil Wars: Both Partys were at last convinc'd, that neither had understood its true Interest. The Court, which Fortune alone had supported, made a great many false Steps; and 'twas evident in the Issue, that each Cabal subsisted more by the Oversights of that which oppos'd it, than its own good Conduct.

SECT. CCLX. Considerable Effects of
some Leagues.

YET for all this, Sir, don't imagine that Leagues are always to be despis'd. I cou'd entertain you a long time, did I relate all the great Exploits they have perform'd. Who got the famous Battel of *Lepanto*? A League form'd against the Turk. The *Sultan* despises not Leagues, so much as his Envoy wou'd make us believe, with his Apologue of the Dragon with many Heads, and many Tails. In the Heat of our League in *France*, the Grand Signior offer'd his Assistance to *Harry IV.* for this Reason principally, That he had a natural Aversion to the word League. And whence sprang his Aversion? From

* Treves.

† In his *Memoirs*.

a lively Idea of the old Armaments against himself, which were call'd by this Name. This disagreeable Idea rendred all Leagues and Confederacys odious to him, according to the Remark of an * ingenious Author in a small Treatise of the *Usefulness of History*, which abounds with excellent Reflections. The League I speak of, which was enter'd into in this Kingdom for the Exclusion of a Hugonot King, did it not gain its Point? Did it not make, not only *Harry III.* but even *Harry the Great* buckle, who was one of the highest-spirited Princes upon Earth? Was not he forc'd to abjure his Religion? And were it not for this, had not he been a wandering King in his own Kingdom? Hadn't he been all his life expos'd to the same Condition, in which he represents himself in his Letter from before *Amiens* to the *Marquis de Rosni*? † *I'll freely tell you the Straits I'm reduc'd to: I'm very near the Enemy, and have scarce a Horse to charge on, nor whole Furniture to clap on his Back: My Shirts are all in Rags; my Doublet out at the Elbows; my Pot scour'd and laid up, and for two Days past I have din'd and sup'd sometimes with one Friend, and sometimes with another; My Purveyors protesting they don't know how to keep my Table any longer, having not receiv'd a Penny of Mony these six Months.*

Yet this League was a Chaos of a thousand jarring Passions, and Messrs *de Guise* themselves not perfectly united. Mr. *de Thou* || informs us, that what most contributed to the Duke of *Guise's*

* L' Abbé de St. Real. † Memoir de Rosni, Tom. I. 345.
|| Hist. lib. 92.

Assassination, was the Duke of *Maine* his Brother's betraying his vast Designs to *Dornano*, and giving him free leave to acquaint *Harry III.* of 'em. These two Brothers came to such Extremitys about a Punk, that they fairly met in the Field. But the Duke of *Maine* thinking better on't, when he saw himself on the point of killing his Brother, or losing his own Life, declin'd the Duel. After the violent Death of the Duke and Cardinal, one wou'd think the League shou'd have dropt. Yet the Duke of *Maine*, tho travers'd by several great Men, who had by-Designs of their own, still kept it on foot; and 'twas *Harry IV's* Lot to submit. Which is the more remarkable, because this great King was incomparably more active in his Nature than the Duke of *Maine*, and more fortunate in his Pleasures. For this poor Duke, in the most pressing Juncture of his Affairs, suffering himself to be drawn* away to the *Hotel de Carnavalet*, " where four or five of
 " his Friends had a merry Meeting with some
 " Ladys of Pleasure, hit so unluckily, that he
 " was forc'd to keep his Chamber for several
 " Weeks after. . . . Yet having only time to take
 " palliative Remedys, the Infection work'd in-
 " wards, render'd him more unactive, more pen-
 " sive and melancholy, and sunk the Spirit of
 " the Party in his single Person.

Besides, was it not a League brought the Emperor and King of *Spain* to consent to the Treaty of *Munster*, a Treaty so full of Mortification for them? And had not *France* made Concessions in

* Mezerai Abreg. Chron. ad An. 1589.

favor of the Duke of *Bavaria*, had not they been forc'd shamefully to annul the Translation of the Electorat, in prejudice of the King of *Bohemia*, who was leagu'd against the Emperor? To offer something of more force, don't we know that our invincible Monarch spar'd no Expence to dissolve the last League, which shews he stood in fear of it? Assure your self, Sir, the Peace concluded at *Nimeguen* in 1678, came very seasonably; and League it as long as you please, I much question whether the Campagns of 1679 and 1680, might have been as successful as the preceding.

They who say the King gave Peace to *Europe*, have more Reason o'their side than they are aware; their meaning is, that his Majesty, touch'd with Compassion for his Enemys, who beg'd Peace, was pleas'd to grant'em this favor at the expence of mighty Victorys, which he might have thank'd no body for. This is all they understand by it, and here's the Ground of all their magnificent Encomiums on the Conqueror's Moderation. But there's one Reason more these Gentlemen don't perceive, tho very obvious, which obliges us to consider the Peace of *Nimeguen* as the King's peculiar Work; That of all the Powers engag'd in the War, there was hardly one but *France* which desir'd an End on't. The House of *Austria* broke off the Conferences of *Cologne* in the most disobliging manner imaginable, and threw in a thousand Difficultys and a thousand Delays to obstruct those of *Nimeguen*. While *France*, which was generally believ'd to be weary of the War, had Patience enough to overlook all the little Incidents which were started day by day.

After

After the Battel of *St. Denys*, where the Prince of *Orange* so vigorously attack'd our Army, and with so considerable an Advantage, who wou'd not have believ'd the Peace intirely broken? Who'd have undertaken that we were a People of so much Moderation and cold Blood, as we shew'd our selves on that occasion? The Allys expected nothing less at our hands. They flatter'd themselves with the hopes of keeping on the War, as they ardently desir'd; and yet have a pretence of saying, that 'twas *France* hinder'd the Conclusion of the Peace. They were highly surpriz'd to find, that the Affront which *Mr. de Luxembourg* receiv'd, was not like to hinder the Treaty of *Nimeguen*'s taking full effect.

Whence cou'd this proceed, Sir, but from the King's great Desire of dissolving the Confederacy, against which he had maintain'd the War for a long time? This last Brush, instead of diminishing this Passion, fortify'd it mainly, because it made him more clearly comprehend the Importance of not letting so brave, so great a Captain as the Prince of *Orange* lie on the Frontiers every Season; who tho but indifferently seconded by the Allys, nay often travers'd by some of 'em, still acted for the Preservation of the *Netherlands*, with all the Intrepidity and good Conduct imaginable. Consider on the whole, whether we ought to despise Leagues. Since his Majesty has shewn a respect for 'em; and since he forgets nothing to prevent the forming any to his own prejudice, and to promote such as may be at his Devotion, they must needs be formidable.

SECT. CCLXI. *We ought not to reckon too much on the present State of Affairs.*

WHAT therefore ought to raise and swell our Hopes, is the Resignation of *Europe*. I call it Resignation; because the Patience she expresses, shews her intirely resign'd to what it shall please God to ordain concerning her Destiny, without dreaming of new Leagues or Confederacys. Yet even this is not to be intirely rely'd on. Once more; there needs only one politick, active Spirit to make a hundred several Nations take up Arms.

Who'd have imagin'd, while *Europe* trembl'd at the Name of the House of *Austria*, and the Councils of our Kings were fill'd with its Pensioners, that there shou'd be a young Student in the *Sorbon*, who shou'd one day sap this mighty Power, and so bait it with Enemys on all sides, that at last it shou'd come reeling with its Nose to the ground? Yet this was really the Case, as the great Cardinal *Richelieu* has made appear, one of the powerfullest Genius's of the Universe. And how know we, but at this very Hour some young Lord, scarce yet out of the Dust of a College, is destin'd to be a Scourge to *France* before twenty Years come about?

*Dii prohibete minas, Dii talem avertite Casum,
Et placidi servate pios.* Virg. *Æn.* 3.

SECT. CCLXII. *The Conclusion of the Work.*

HERE I stop, Sir, wondering at my self, when I cast back my Eyes on the excessive length of this Scroll; and much more when I think of the strange Medley which runs thro it. For what have I not talk'd of? What strange Set of Thoughts have I not crouded together, taking sometimes what I had read in Books, sometimes what I had heard in Conversation, sometimes what my own small Stock furnish'd. You'l easily perceive in the whole much the same Irregularity, as is observable in Citys; which being built at different times, and repair'd sometimes in one place, sometimes in another; one sees a little House pricking up by a great one, an old one by a new. Just thus, Sir, has this Miscellany of various Reflections been huddled together; I have often turn'd back to make Additions and Amendments, now in one place, now in another. You'd easily guess so much by the first Work; but you'l find it much plainer by examining this Copy, which I must desire you, Sir, to go by. I consider'd 'twou'd be some Ease to you in the reading, shou'd I divide it into short Sections; and therefore made all the haste I cou'd with this Edition. I have made several Additions, and might make a great many more, but that I think it better to wait for your learn'd Observations. I shan't be surpriz'd if you accuse me of having advanc'd several crude and undigested Notions; for I can with the utmost Sincerity assure you, that when I first sat down to write, I did not know what I shou'd

shou'd say at the third Page ; and that almost all I have said occur'd as I wrote to you, without my ever having had a Thought on't before in the whole course of my Life. And tho I prepar'd you in the beginning for some such confus'd Miscellany, I vow I did not my self believe I shou'd keep my Word so strictly. Perhaps you mayn't be displeas'd to see what this Work may be reduc'd to if one cut off the Digressions : cast your Eye on what follows, and you'l see I have taken the pains to make an Abridgment, out of pure love to you.

SECT. CCLXIII. *An Abridgment of the whole Work.*

TO bring the Dispute into a narrow compass, I say, if Comets were Prefages of human Calamitys, this must be either as they are an efficient Cause of 'em, or as they are bare Signs only. There's no denying this.

Now they are not Prefages, either as they are efficient Causes, or as they are the Signs of Calamitys. The Conclusion's obvious, if I prove both Branches of this Proposition.

The first Branch I prove by four Reasons.

I. Because maintaining, that Comets are the efficient Cause of Wars, new Religions, Conspiracys, and such like Plagues of human Society as depend on the free Will of Man, and the Concurrence of a thousand fortuitous Cases, is not only a Heresy, but even the grossest of all Absurditys, as I have sufficiently made appear.

II. Because there's no Argument *a priori*, in the Language of Philosophers, proving, that Comets have

have any Virtue of producing physically, either a Famine, or Mortality, or any thing of the like Nature.

III. That it's false, this Point may be prov'd by any Arguments *a posteriori*; that's to say, by Arguments drawn from Experience. For all that can be prov'd from Experience, amounts at most but to this; That as oft as Comets have appear'd in the Heavens, so often some great Calamity's have ensu'd on Earth. Which is so far from proving that Comets have been the Cause of these Calamity's, that one may as well prove a Man's going out of his House in a Morning is the Cause of such Multitudes passing along the Streets that whole day. In a word, it's wretched reasoning to conclude from one thing's constantly following another, that therefore it's the true Effect of that other. The falling of a Stone which one has jerk'd into the Air, constantly and necessarily follows the Action of him who cast it; and yet this Action is not the efficient Cause of the Stone's descending. But there's something more still in our case; which is, that Experience proves not, there have been more Calamity's after the Appearance of Comets than at other times: and to pretend the contrary is pure illusion, and pure mistake in point of Fact. One need only consult the Annals of the World without prejudice, to be convinc'd of what I say.

IV. Because had Comets a virtue of causing a Pestilence, or Famine, as they are Causes which act necessarily and without respect of Persons, they must without distinction ravage all parts of the Earth o'er which they move, or to which they are visible in making the Tour of the World, which

is notoriously false. If it be said, that they don't every where find the necessary Dispositions for producing such an Effect; I shall take leave to say; they can for that very reason presage nothing certain: for how know we upon seeing 'em, whether any part of the World shall then have the Dispositions which Comets require? One is not oblig'd to believe they forbear shewing themselves, till the Causes which concur with their Influences are ready and ripe in any part of the World.

The other Branch of the Proposition, to wit, that Comets presage not Calamitys, as Signs of these Calamitys, is plain from the following Reasons.

I. Because Comets are neither a natural Sign of Calamitys, nor a Sign by Institution.

For were they a natural Sign of Calamitys, it follows they must either be a necessary Cause of 'em, which we have shewn to be false; or at least that there must be a necessary Connexion between Comets and Calamitys: which is equally false; because Experience, the only Rule for justifying this pretended Connexion against all the Reasons which oppose it, proves nothing less. Every one's capable of satisfying himself in this Point, and of seeing at the same time, how very wrong we are in boasting of our Reason, when it's of so little service to us, that almost all the World's engag'd in a Persuasion void of every kind of Proof, as well in point of Fact as Reason.

That Comets are not Signs of Calamitys by Institution, is evident in It self; God having nowhere reveal'd, as he has with regard to the Rainbow, that he wou'd give us Blazing-Stars in the Heavens, as Warnings of his extraordinary Judgments:

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II. Because, were Comets the Sign of any Calamity different from natural and instituted Signs, 'twere fit God shou'd imprint on 'em some peculiar Characters, to discover what they imported, no less distinctly than an express Revelation; which might justify the Judgment of those who maintain they are evil Presages, and render those inexcusable who believ'd it not. Now this Almighty God has not done: On the contrary, he has left 'em so destitute of all the true Marks of a significative Prodigy, that one might justly think he rather design'd to check our natural Credulity. He has subjected 'em to the Jurisdiction of the Sun, which disposes of the situation of their long Tails, as it does of the smallest Cloud; and to that of the Fogs and foul Sky, which deprive us of the sight of 'em for half the time. He sometimes gives 'em a Course which leads into the Rays of the Sun, where they become wholly invisible: Sometimes gives 'em so little Magnitude, or so high an Elevation, that they are visible to none except perhaps an Astronomer or two, who wait whole Nights with their best Telescopes for a sight of 'em. Then again he often lets 'em appear fairly, and allows us a considerable time to view 'em, as if he'd render 'em familiar, and permit us to study their Motions. But above all, he gives 'em a Character of Universality, which alone is sufficient to deprive 'em of the Quality of Signs; for God having never had a Purpose of afflicting the whole Earth at the same time, has surely never given us Signs of such a Purpose. Yet if Comets be presaging Signs, they must be Signs of this nature, because they threaten all Nations alike. And hence it's plain, did
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Men make the least use of their Reason, that these are not menacing Signs, because it's not likely all who see Comets shou'd be afflicted, and because the constant Course of the World has been, for one Nation to be a gainer by the Spoils of another: God, besides this, never affecting to signalize his Judgments in the Years which succeed next after Comets, more than at other Seasons; and yet this is the Point, without which 'tis impossible Comets shou'd have the least pretence to denounce future Evils. A particular Nation might very well happen to be more distress'd at such a time than ever before or after, as it hapned in *France*, after the appearance of several Comets, under the Reign of *Harry III.* and in the beginning of his Successor's Reign. But it do's not therefore follow, that all Nations consider'd together were more afflicted at that time, unless in the Logick of some little Minds, who measure the Destiny of all Human Affairs by that of the small Community within their knowledg, and who cry out, if a shower of Hail fall on their own poor Village, that since the World was a World there never was so sad a Year, Seasons so unfortunate, so disastrous. Look at the condition of *Spain* under the Comets which, they say, caus'd our Civil Wars: You'l find she then added *Portugal* and the *West-Indies* to her other vast Monarchys: That Fortune loaded her with Favors, and that her King was said to govern the World with his Pen.

III. Because after all I have said, were Comets still Signs, they must be Signs form'd miraculously by God, and enjoyning all Mankind to prepare for appeasing the Wrath of Heaven; that is, God

must have given, and still give Signs to occasion a hundred million new Acts of Idolatry. Which can't be offer'd without Impiety.

Having prov'd both Parts of my Proposition, and shewn that Comets are by no means what most People imagine; I conclude, Sir, that they are Bodys as antient as the World, which by the Laws of Motion wherewith God governs the vast Machine of the Universe, are from time to time determin'd to pass within our view, and to reflect the Light of the Sun upon us, modify'd in such a manner as to make us perceive a long train of its golden Locks, whether before or behind their Heads is uncertain; on which you may consult *Messieurs* of the Academy Royal of Sciences. That for any thing farther, their Passage into our World is of no consequence, either good or bad, any more than the Voyage of an *Indian* into *Europe*. With full liberty, however, for all that please, according to the Instincts of their Piety, to mortify at the sight of these Phenomena.

You'll find a ready Handle from this Conclusion, for reconciling the Lights of Philosophy with those of Conscience.

I submit the whole Work to those of your Understanding; and tho I undertake to answer all the Objections you may make, I shall however always acknowledg you as my Master and Doctor.

Octob. 11. 1681.

I am, &c.

The End of the Reflections.

*An Appeal to all the Universitys
of Europe, for a Decision of
the following Points.*

*To the Rectors of all Christian Uni-
versitys.*

Gentlemen,

I Beseech you in the most humble manner,
That you'll be pleas'd to convocate your
Academick Assemblys, in order to pro-
nounce Judgment in a Difference, which has
made some noise in *Holland* for these two or
three last Years.

This Difference is founded on a Book con-
cerning Comets, which I publish'd in the
Year 1682. and on a Letter which appear'd
soon after, concerning an erroneous Con-
science.

In my Treatise of Comets I taught,
I. That considering the necessity of a thing's
being properly a Miracle before it can be a
Presage; and considering the infinite number
of Presages, which the Pagans accounted
such, and which Christians still observe;

considering also the Meanness of most of them, their Obscurity, their Uselessness, their increasing Superstition and Idolatry: 'Twere better ascribe what we commonly call Presages to the general Laws of Nature which God has establish'd, than to those particular Volitions in God which produce Miracles.

II. That considering the Aversion God expresses against Idolatry, and his strict Prohibitions, under the Idea of a *jealous* God, against this Sin in particular; considering also that before the Birth of JESUS CHRIST the whole Earth, except *Palestine* a very small spot of it, was given up to the Worship of Idols, it can't be suppos'd God shou'd miraculously produce Comets to warn Men of impending Evils, since this had been working Miracles to give new Life to the abominable Worship of Idols all the World over; the Pagans being every where persuaded, that Comets were menacing Signs, and continually redoubling their Sacrifices and impious Ceremonys in honor of the false Gods, on the first Appearance of these Stars.

III. That considering the many Abominations of the Pagan Idolatry, and that declar'd Abhorrence of the Prophets against it,
speaking

speaking to us on the part of God ; it is not to be believ'd, that the preserving this Idolatry lest Atheism shou'd abound, cou'd be the propos'd or adequate End or Design of God's working Miracles.

IV. That considering the natural Proneness of Man to Superstition, the Vigilance of the Devil, and the Interest of Priests and Magistrates to maintain Idolatry ; considering also there are sundry uncommon Phenomena furnish'd by an ordinary Providence, in consequence of the general Laws of Nature ; there never was a necessity of Miracles to prevent the extinguishing of Idolatry, and the general Prevalence of Atheism.

V. That considering the Idea of *Jealous*, and that of *King*, by which God was pleas'd to manifest himself to the World ; the Crimes and Blasphemys in which consisted the Essence of the Gentile Idolatrous Worship ; the execrable Vileness of the false Divinitys exalted to the Throne in exclusion of the only true God ; we may reasonably believe, that God was less provok'd by those who acknowledg'd no Divinity at all, than by the Gentile World : As a jealous Husband must be more sensibly griev'd at a Wife that turns errand Prostitute, than at one who obstinately renounces all Con-

versation with Men; or as a King shou'd be more incens'd at Subjects who dethroning him transfer'd their Allegiance to a Stranger, than if they intirely chang'd the form of Kingly Government; and at Neighbors who join'd with his mortal Enemy, more than at those who kept themselves neuter.

VI. That considering the infinite difference in point of moral and natural Perfection between the true God and the Pagan Idols, it can't be said that they who knew and honor'd these Idols, either knew or honor'd the true God; insomuch that Pagans were no less void of the Knowledg of God than Atheists, and pass'd their whole Life without rendring him any Act of Honor no less than they. This the Protestants cannot contest without ruining their Cause against the Roman Catholicks in the point of Creature Worship, terminating, as they maintain, purely and simply in the Creature, without any other relation to God, be the Intention of the Saints Votarys what it will, than as it's displeasing to him in the highest degree.

VII. That considering the horrible Corruption of Manners which reign'd among the Pagans, and that Inlet to all kind of Violence and Impurity which their Idea of the Principal Deity

Deity set open (they said *Jupiter* gelt and dethron'd his Father, marry'd his Sister, ravish'd a world of young Women, stole away *Ganymede*) considering 'also the Outrages of the Heathens against their avow'd Divinitys, and the Crimes they were continually committing for and against 'em; there's no reason to think Mankind had been more corrupt in a total State of Irreligion, than in that of the Pagan Idolatry.

VIII. That considering the Doctrine of Original Sin, and that of the Necessity and Inamissibility of Grace, decided at the Synod of *Dort*, every reform'd Protestant is oblig'd to believe, that all, except the predestin'd, whom God regenerates and sanctifys, are incapable of acting out of a Principle of Love to God, or resisting their Corruptions from any other Principle than that of Self-love and human Motives : So that if some Men are more virtuous than others, this proceeds either from Natural Constitution, or Education, or from a Love for certain kinds of Praise, or from a fear of Reproach, &c. And if a servile fear of Hell is sufficient to procure an Observance of the Externals of Religion, offering Victims, contributing to the charge of Worship; yet is it not capable of converting the Heart to the true God, by a sincere renouncing of the inward Corruption.

IX. That this being the case, nothing hinders but Men without a Religion may live up to the Rules of Civility as well as Pagans; since the same Principles which mov'd the Pagans may happily meet in them, Temper, Education, Love of Praise, and a Fear of Reproach.

X. That considering the prodigious numbers of those who live not according to their Principles, who know God forbids Impurity and Falshood, and yet abandon themselves to the Lusts of the Flesh, to Fraud and Slander; considering also the Agreement observable in a world of Christians, between a historical Belief of the Gospel and a fearful Licentiousness of Manners, we must allow that the Notions of the Mind are by no means the Spring of human Actions; and therefore that the Pagans, with all that general loose Knowledge which they had of a Deity, might not necessarily be in a better State for purifying the Heart, than if utterly void of this Knowledge.

XI. That considering what a noise has been made in *France* against Mr. *Pajon's* System, it's impossible for a rigid Calvinist to believe, that having a bare Persuasion of Gospel Truths,

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Truths, is sufficient towards possessing *ipso facto* all that's requisite to the Practice of Gospel-Morality.

XII. That considering the Ideas of Honour and Glory which prevail among Christians, and which yet they don't borrow from the Gospel ; considering also the Ideas of Honour and Glory, so powerful among the Pagans, which yet the System of their impure Theology did not inspire, a Man may entertain such Ideas independently of the Belief of a God : he may, for example, apprehend, that an Ingrate deserves to be blam'd, that a Child deserves Praise for his respect to his Parents ; as he apprehends, independent of all Religion, that the Whole is greater than its Part.

XIII. That considering the modest and regular Life of *Epicurus*, *Pliny*, and some other Atheists, of which History makes mention, it can't be said that the Ignorance of a Providence is a necessary cause of a Corruption of Manners ; unless we maintain such an Absurdity as this, that a thing whereof there are several Examples is yet utterly impossible.

XIV.

XIV. That considering these Examples, the force of natural Temper, that of Education, that of the Taste of each particular Country, 'tis absurd to maintain, That an Atheist, of what Temper soever he is, in what Way soever bred, in what Country he lives, is necessarily sunk in all kind of Vice; a Drunkard, Adulterer, Incestuous, Coverous; a Robber, Traitor, an Assassin, a Backbiter, False Witness, Parricide, Poisoner, an Enemy and Persecutor of his own Flesh and Blood: In a word, that he's necessarily more inordinate than any Pagan, of whatever Constitution, whatever Country, or in whatever Way he has bin bred.

XV. That to discover the true difference between the heinousness of one Crime and another, we must not have regard to human Laws, which punish some, and tolerate others, but to this single Circumstance, whether forbid by God: If so, it can't be committed without the Sinner's running into all that Iniquity which constitutes the Nature of Sin. That the Circumstances which arise from the State of the Sinner, from his Knowledg and Intentions, vary the Turpitude according to the Degrees of more and less; yet that the Evil-speaker and
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Unclean are as criminal in the Sight of God as the Murderer.

XVI. That the Idea of Order, clearly discovering to us, that the Moral Perfections excel the Physical, and that the more one loves Virtue, the more he prefers it to Life; God, who is sovereignly holy, ought to have (if it be proper to make use of the Differences of more and less with relation to God) a greater regard for his Holiness than for his Authority: and therefore they who represent him sully'd with Vice and Crimes, as the Pagans represented *Jupiter*, wound him in a more sensible part, than they who with *Epicurus* rob him of the Government of the World.

XVII. That Independence being the highest of all the natural Divine Perfections, and that which in the Schools distinguishes God from all other Beings; 'tis a less Error to suppose with *Epicurus*, that God, perfectly happy in himself, interferes not in the Government of the World, than to imagine, as some Pagans have, that the Divinity needs being nourish'd by Exhalations.

This, Gentlemen, is the substance of what I have taught. We have a Minister and
Professor

Professor of Divinity at *Rotterdam*, who maintains, That this Doctrine is impious, and alledges it as a notorious proof of Atheism. 'Twere wronging your sublime Judgments, shou'd I desire you to get it solemnly declar'd that he's mistaken in this part of the Charge. There is not a Student in your Classes who is not capable of sparing you this Trouble: And seeing the true God is so interwoven in all my Doctrines, that he reigns in every part of 'em, he's to be met with in the Principles, in the Consequences, in the Applications, in the Uses, *in, cum, sub*, as the *Lutherans* express themselves in another Case: What I therefore desire of you is, that you will give yourselves the trouble to examine, whether my Doctrine may be so much as false: I for my part believe it true in the utmost rigor, philosophically as well as theologically with relation to a *Calvinist*. Shou'd your Decisions be against me, I'm ready to pay 'em all the respect they deserve: Be pleas'd then to let me know, if I am in an Error, how each of my Errors is to be qualify'd; for there are Errors you know of various kinds, the Indiscreet, the Rash, the Dangerous, the Scandalous, and the Heretical.

T H E E N D.

THE
L I F E
O F

Mr. Bayle.

IN A
LETTER
TO A
Peer of Great Britain.

L O N D O N;

Printed in the Year M. DCC. VIII.

THE
FILE
OF
The Publisher to the Reader.

THE following Account of Mr. Bayle's Life being sent from beyond Sea to a British Peer, was communicated to me by a Gentleman who had the opportunity of taking a Copy of it; and there being an Appendix to the second Volume of the Miscellaneous Reflections in the French, relating to a Treatise written against Mr. Bayle, which is only a private Dispute, and no ways concerns us here, I thought I could not oblige the Publick more than by giving this Life in the room of it. 'Tis probable, had the Author a Design of publishing it, he might have left out or softened some things.

L O N D O N
Printed in the Year M. DCC. VIII.

(3)

**THE
LIFE
OF**

Mr. BAYLE.

MY LORD,

THE manner in which you express your Concern for the Death of Mr. Bayle, carries his Elogy beyond any thing the greatest Panegyrist can say in his Favor; and to me it's no small Consolation to find your Lordship inclin'd to espouse his Memory, at a time when most of his Friends seem to have abandon'd it to the spitefullest flings of Envy and Ill-nature. It's true, my Lord, this is no more than might justly be expected from a Soul so great, so generous

as yours. That kind Opinion with which you had honor'd Mr. Bayle, was founded on Motives too solid to be ever shaken. You admir'd the Beauty of his Wit, and the Justness of his Judgment; but you were still more charm'd with his Modesty, his Disinterestedness, and Integrity of Heart. 'Twas by this part of him that he had the Happiness of pleasing you, and (if I may presume to say so much) of engaging your Friendship. You had given Proofs of it to himself on several occasions; and you continue to express it farther, by the Commands you have laid upon me of sending you an Account of his Life. I shan't, my Lord, excuse myself in any Difficultys which appear in the discharge of such a Task; I shall thank you rather, in the most humble manner, for your Goodness in prescribing it to me. 'Twas Mr. Bayle procur'd me the Honor of being known to your Lordship, and to him I'm oblig'd for all the Favors you have done me. I have long sought for an occasion of testifying my Acknowledgments to your Lordship, and I cou'd never hope for one more favorable than this. I shan't therefore hesitate a moment in communicating

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

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nicating to your Lordship what Mr. Bayle had inform'd me of his own Life, during a course of several years Acquaintance, and what he has left concerning himself in some Passages of his Books. 'Tis true, it all amounts to no great matter: The Lives of Philosophers seldom abound with considerable Events; their Writings and their Disputes are the only Battels and sounding Actions in the History of these Heroes. I shall therefore chiefly aim at entertaining your Lordship with some account of the Works which Mr. Bayle has publish'd, and of the Disputes he had bin engag'd in, yet without setting up either for a Judg or Apologist. If I sometimes chance to take his part, it shall only be with relation to Facts, and where the force of Truth won't suffer me to be silent.

MR. Peter Bayle was born in 1648. 1648.
in a small Town of the County of Foix, call'd *Carlat*, of which his Father was Minister. His Mother was of the House of *Ducasse*, an antient Gentleman's Family, and which makes a very good Figure in that Country. The Ministers

were much esteem'd in *France*, as well on account of the regularity of their Manners, as because they were intitled to the same Privileges with the Gentry in Civil Matters: Hence it was that Persons of Quality thought it no Dishonor to breed up their Children to the Ministry. One may even affirm in general, that there was scarce a Minister in *France* who was not of a good Family: And this, my Lord, proceeded from the Protestants having no Colleges in which their Youth might be bred up *gratis*; so that they were oblig'd to send their Children to Academys generally at a great distance, which requir'd a considerable Expence. Upon this account we are not to wonder that the Ministers sometimes marry'd into the best Familys of their Province.

Mr. *Bayle* the Father gain'd the Esteem of every one by his Vertue and exemplary Piety: He was a Man free from Ambition, free from Pride, and of a truly primitive Simplicity. He had three Sons whom he carefully bred up for the Ministry: The Eldest came to be his Father's Collegue in the Church of *Carlat*, and the Youngest died at *Paris*, being only a *Proposant* or Candidate
for

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for the Ministry. Mr. Bayle, who was the second, began his Studys under his Father, who instructed him in the first Rudiments of Literature, and brought him to read some *Greek* and *Latin* Authors: But the Dutys of his Function not allowing him to imploy much time in his Instruction, he was considerably retarded in his Studys, and made not so great a Proficiency as might be expected from him.

When he had arriv'd to the Age of Eighteen, and his Father saw he had made Progress enough in human Learning to attain a thorow perfection by himself, he enter'd him in the Academy of *Puy-laurens*: He intended he shou'd finish his Studys in this place, and afterwards embrace that kind of Life to which he had from the beginning design'd him. Mr. Bayle soon perceiv'd the difference, for a Man of Letters, between a Home-Education and a College: He was overjoy'd to find himself in the Company of several learned Men, who had a great deal of Merit: he propos'd 'em a thousand Questions; and they were so charm'd at his Assiduity in all the Exercises of Religion, and so struck with the Vivacity of his Genius, that

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they soon distinguish'd him amidst the other young Scholars of his standing. It's true, his way of Life was much less dissipated than theirs; he often walk'd abroad with those whose Humors nearest suited his own: but instead of making one in their Partys of Pleasure, he constantly shut himself up in his Study, and with incredible Ardor read over the best antient and modern Books which fell into his hands. *Plutarch* and *Montagne* were his Favorite Authors; and concerning the latter, he us'd to tell his Friends in Mirth, that if all the Copys of his *Essays* were lost to the World, he cou'd retrieve 'em to a Tittle, so often had he read 'em over. His Memory was extraordinary happy, and presented him at the instant with any thing he had ever committed to it.

But *Puy-laurens* was too narrow a Scene for so vast a Genius. How agreeable soever this Town appear'd to him at his first coming, he began in a short time to disrelish it. He had already drain'd the Learned there of their best Notions, and did not find Librarys well enough furnish'd to stay his insatiable Appetite for reading. He resolv'd to quit the Place, and remove to some grea-

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ter Town; but he was not a little divided in making a Choice. He wou'd very willingly have gone to one of the famous foreign Universitys; but the fear of putting his Father to a burdensom Expence, made him soon give over this Design. At last he consider'd that *Thoulouse* was one of the finest Towns of *France*, that few Places in *Europe* abounded more with learned Men or choicer Librarys, that it was at no great distance from the place of his Birth; and what finally determin'd him, was its having a College where a certain number of the Youth of his County were bred and maintain'd on the Foundation, and which for this reason was call'd the *College of Foix*.

Thither he remov'd after having past 1668.
about two years and a half at *Puy-laurens*, and made four or five months Progress in Philosophy; and now pursu'd his Studys with incredible Application: But what was extremely afflicting herein to his Family, was, after some time, his changing his Religion. While he study'd Philosophy in the College of *Puy-laurens*, he was not so taken up with the ordinary Exercises as not to find time enough to look into Treatises of
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Controversy, not with the Spirit that People commonly do, to confirm themselves in preconceiv'd Opinions, but to examine, according to the great Principle of Protestants, whether the Doctrine he had suck'd in with the Breast were True or no, which requires a thorow knowledg of both sides of the Cause : For this reason he had the Curiosity of seeing the Arguments of Roman Catholicks in their own Writings. He met with Objections so plausible against the Doctrine which admits no living Judg upon Earth, to whose Decisions the Faithful are oblig'd to submit in all Disputes about religious Matters ; that not able to answer 'em satisfactorily to his own Reason, and less still to defend his Principles against some subtle Controvertists with whom he had to deal at *Thoulouse*, he began to think himself a Schismatick, and out of the way of Salvation, and oblig'd to reunite to the main Stock, whereof he look'd on the Protestant Communions as so many lop'd Branches. Accordingly reconcil'd, he continu'd his Studys in the College of the Jesuits, as almost all do, of what Quality or Condition soever, in all Countrys where the Roman Religion prevails:

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But the excessive Worship he saw paid to Creatures, appearing to him suspect, and Philosophy informing him more fully of the impossibility of Transubstantiation, he concluded there must be some Fallacy in the Objections to which he had submitted; and taking a stricter Review of the two Religions, he recover'd that Light which he had before bin blind to, and stedfastly follow'd it, without the least regard to a thousand temporal Advantages of which he depriv'd himself, and a thousand vexatious Affairs which appear'd to him inevitable by cleaving to it.

The Doctors of the College of *Foix*, who soon discover'd Mr. Bayle's fine Talents, were overjoy'd at their Purchase in him; and the Bishop of *Rieux*, in whose Diocess the Town of *Carlat* lay, express'd a particular Satisfaction at his Change. The Library was always open to him, and no means were neglected to make sure of him; when he form'd a Resolution of quitting the Place with the very first Opportunity, his stay being grown insupportable, since some late additional Reasons had further convinc'd him of the false step he had made. But he was not a little perplex'd how
to

to make an honorable Retreat; he was destitute of the necessary Supplies for undertaking a long Voyage, and knew no body to whom he cou'd trust his Design. By good Fortune for him, Mr. *Ducasse de Pradals*, a Gentleman who was his Relation, hapned about this time to come to *Thoulouse*, and make him a Visit. Mr. Bayle bless'd Heaven which sent him so trusty a Person in such a Juncture; he open'd his Heart to him, and this generous Friend preventing him with Offers of every thing for his Occasions, he retir'd to *Geneva*, after having continu'd about a Year and a half at *Thoulouse*.

1670. You'l easily judg, that such a step as this cou'd not but be very agreeable to his Family. The Grief occasion'd in it by his change of Religion, was recompens'd by an inexpressible Joy and Consolation. The College of *Puy-laurens*, which was sensibly concern'd at his Lapse, had no less a share of Satisfaction. No sooner was Mr. Bayle arriv'd at *Geneva*, but he edify'd the whole Academy there by the manner in which he mourn'd his Fall, and the Zeal he exprest for the Reform'd Religion. Mr. *de Normandie*, Syndic of *Geneva*,

Geneva, took Mr. Bayle into his Family, to instruct his Children. Mr. Basnage, who was then a Student at Geneva, hapned to lodg in the same House: He no sooner knew Mr. Bayle, but he courted his Friendship; and Mr. Bayle cou'd not oblige himself more, than by giving his intire Affections to a Person whom he mightily esteem'd, and whose Merit began already to be known.

Two Years after, the Count de Dhona 1672. inquiring of Mr. Basnage for a Preceptor for his Children, he recommended Mr. Bayle, who finding himself in a manner perfected in his Studys, accepted the Employment, and had the Direction of the Studys of the Count de Dhona, Governor to the Prince Royal of Prussia; of the Count his Brother, Major General in the Troops of Holland; and of a third Brother of the Family. He stay'd with 'em for about two Years; but growing weary of the Country, he resolv'd for Paris, which he look'd on as the Center of Wit and Politeness. Besides, he knew, the Arts and Sciences flourish'd there more than in any part of the World, by the Care the Ministry took of inviting thither, at any expence, all who excel'd in their
several

several Professions. Constant Conferences were held there on all sorts of Subjects, and Men of Letters had a free and easy Access.

1674. Accordingly he return'd to *Geneva* in 1674. and after he had seen all his Friends, he departed thence with a Relation of Mr. *Basnage*, who study'd there, and took him along with him to *Roan*. Here he staid about six Months, and afterwards proceeded to *Paris*. The Satisfactions he met with in this great Town were much beyond what he expected; so that he cou'd not forbear thinking all the time he had past in other Places, just so much thrown away. Mr. *De Beringhen*, Great Master of the Horse, took him to be Governor to a young Gentleman of his Family.

1675. Mr. *Basnage* was then at *Sedan*, where he finish'd his Studys in Divinity. Mr. *Bayle* wrote to him frequently, giving accounts of every thing that came out at *Paris*, relating to the Sciences or Polite Learning; and Mr. *Basnage* generally shew'd his Letters to Mr. *Jurien*, then a Divinity Professor in the College of *Sedan*. Soon after a Philosophy Professor's Chair falling vacant, Mr. *Basnage* cast his Eyes on Mr. *Bayle* to fill it, and

and mention'd him to Mr. *Jarieu* who promis'd to serve him. Mr. *Basnage* wrote to Mr. *Bayle* to come immediately to *Sedan*: but he excus'd himself at first, apprehending that his change of Religion, which was a Secret to all in those parts but Mr. *Basnage*, might come to be discover'd, and a Pretence, grounded on the Edict against relaps'd Persons, be taken to bring him into trouble, and perhaps all the Reform'd of *Sedan*. Mr. *Jarieu* was surpriz'd at the Reluctance which Mr. *Bayle* express'd, and desir'd to know the meaning on't; Mr. *Basnage* told him the true reason, and he assuring him of his Secrecy, said it ought not to hinder his standing for the Chair. Several stood Candidates at the same time, and among others the Son of one of the Professors of the College, who had a strong Party for him; but as Mr. *Basnage* had a great many Friends in that Party too, particularly Mr. *du Rondel* Professor in Oratory, he doubted not but Mr. *Bayle* wou'd carry it from all the Competitors as soon as he had an opportunity of shewing himself. In effect, Mr. *Bayle* disputed with so much Clearness and Force, and discover'd such a Quickness of Apprehension, and

and so extraordinary a Penetration, that the whole Body of the Academy judg'd him the Victory, and receiv'd him into the Number of its Professors.

Since your Lordship is pleas'd to desire a Character of *Mr. Jurieu*, who has made so much noise in the World, I shall here begin to describe him, such as he then betimes discover'd himself. He had a lively Wit, a rich and happy Imagination, and a manner of writing very agreeable; but withal turbulent, proud, rash, imperious, positive, and abounding with a high Conceit of himself. Fill'd with the Idea of his own extraordinary Talents, he snatch'd greedily at all Occasions of excelling, and giving himself Airs above the rest of the World. But the Heat of his Imagination sometimes confounded his Judgment, and the Impetuoulness of his Temper hurry'd him to Practices dishonorable and unworthy a Man of his Profession. Two or three Passages in his Conduct had sufficiently distinguish'd his Character. *Mr. Pajon*, Minister of *Orleans*, and his intimate Friend, a Person of rare Merit and of an admirable good Understanding, had form'd a System on the Operations of

of Grace, which look'd new, but was in the main reconcilable to the Doctrine of Predestination, as understood by all the Churches of *France*. Yet Mr. *Jurieu*, jealous of every thing which seem'd to eclipse his Glory, enter'd into a Cabal with some Ministers of *Paris*, who had no Kindness for Mr. *Pajon*, and did all he cou'd to ruin him. Mr. *D'Huiffeau*, Minister of *Sau-mur*, having publish'd a Treatise concerning *The Reunion of Christians*, tending to beget a Spirit of mutual Charity and Toleration, Mr. *Jurieu* wrote an Answer to it with a great deal of Gall and Violence. Mr. *D'Huiffeau's* Maxims were far from relishing with his Palat. The Spirit of Gentleness and Moderation is the Bane of a proud and cholerick Nature; and Toleration reducing Men to a kind of Equality, can't fail being the Aversion of Persons spiritually proud, and who look down with Contempt on the rest of the World. Besides, how digest a Doctrine which prostitutes the Favors of Heaven, and bereaves of the sweet Persuasion of being the Confidants of the secret things of God, and the sole Defenders of his Cause?

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Cause? Not to be of these mens Religion, is in short being of no Religion at all. Accordingly Mr. *Jurieu* expressly declares, *That God had from that time call'd him forth to fight with this Monster of Indifference for all Religions.* Yet he had no great Reason to boast of his Undertaking against Mr. *D'Huissseau*; the best Judges found his Reasonings pitiful, and the dear Work was unfortunately condemn'd in the Synod of *Saintonge*, as containing heretical Propositions. This was his first Trial of Skill, and he has taken care not to bely it in his after Performances. The Vehemence of his Passions has often run him into extravagant Notions, and put him upon maintaining several Propositions either false or contradictory; and the warmth of his Imagination sometimes represented things to him quite otherwise than they were. I cou'd give incontestable Instances of this; but I chuse to suppress them, and am willing to draw a veil over some civil Affairs, in which he was indiscreetly embark'd, and some Law Suits mov'd by him, contrary to all Justice and Equity, which oblig'd him to a Journey to *Paris*, and which he wou'd not so easily

easily have got clear of, if he had not to deal with Persons of much more Prudence and Moderation than himself. I'll only take notice, that Mr. D'Huiffeau was no less his Friend than Mr. Pajon. But 'twas his way with all that were dearest to him: He pick'd some quarrel or other the moment he apprehended 'em as his Rivals in Glory, or saw they did not espouse and applaud him in every thing. Then he fell foul of 'em, and endeavor'd to blacken their Reputation with a Charge of Heterodoxy. Thus the Fondness of his Soul made him treat his Bosom Friends. *These Gentlemen, says he himself, whom I then attack'd with all my Might, were my Neighbors and best Friends; and never was there the least Misunderstanding between us.*

Every one may plainly see to what Hazards a Body expos'd himself by making so terrible a Friend as Mr. Jurieu; and no doubt if Mr. Bayle had known the Man, he'd always have shun'd his Conversation with as much Care as he once seem'd to court it. But the Uprightness and Simplicity of his own Heart wou'd not suffer him to entertain Suspicions of this kind. Ever ready to judg charitably, he did not

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make it his business to sift Mr. *Jurieu's* Conduct, nor thorowly to examine its secret Motives. 'Tis true too, Mr. *Jurieu's* lofty intractable Humor seem'd incapable of withstanding Mr. *Bayle's* extreme Modesty and Sweetness of Temper. His Manners were so obliging, his Conduct so regular, and his Discourses so discreet and moderate, that Mr. *Jurieu* cou'd not forbear giving him his utmost Esteem and good Wishes. *He liv'd, says he, several years in the Academy of Sedan, without giving the least Offence, either in Word or Deed. His bright Genius, and worthy Principles so engag'd my Affections, that I lov'd him, I own, more intirely than I ever lov'd any one besides.* You shall see, my Lord, that Mr. *Jurieu* in process of time wou'd not have Mr. *Bayle* exempted out of the number of those *best Friends* of his, whom he persecuted unmercifully.

1679. While he was taken up with the Business of his Place, a Minister of his Acquaintance, in 1679. brought him Mr. *Poiret's* Book, entitl'd, *Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, Anima, & Malo*; and desir'd him to communicate the Difficultys which might occur to his thoughts
in

in the reading. Mr. Bayle examin'd this Work carefully, and sent his Objections against it to his Friend, together with a Letter of Thanks. The Minister communicates 'em to Mr. Poiret, who wrote an Answer to 'em, and sent it him with a Letter, in which he thanks him for having procur'd him an Adversary, so accurate, so judicious, so penetrating, and so Gentleman-like a Writer. These Objections, and the Answer, are inserted in a second Edition which Mr. Poiret gave of his Book at *Amsterdam*, in 1685.

The next Year after, a Jesuit of *Caen* 1680. call'd P. de Valois, under the feign'd name of *Louis de la Ville*, printed a Treatise at *Paris*, entitl'd, *The Sentiments of Mr. Descartes concerning the Essence and Propertys of Body, repugnant to the Doctrine of the Church, and favoring the Errors of Calvin in the point of the Eucharist*. He dedicates it to the Clergy of *France*, and exhorts the Bishops speedily to apply a Remedy to the growing Evil with which the Church was threaten'd by the *Cartesians*: He conjures 'em, in the Name of the whole Kingdom, to pronounce Sentence of Condemnation against Cartesianism; and to engage

'em the more, by a Reason he knew was all-powerful over their minds; he told 'em of an Order of Council, banishing the *Cartesian* Philosophy out of the University of *Paris*, and of a Letter under the Privy Seal, silencing a *Cartesian* Professor. This Book alarm'd the whole Sect; Mr. *Regis* a famous *Cartesian*, who held constant Conferences at *Paris*, was forc'd to break off, and add this Disgrace to that of never having been able to obtain a Licence for printing a Body of Philosophy, which had lain by him of a long time. Every one dreaded being oblig'd to sign some new Formulary, or to be excommunicated for Heresy.

Mr. *de la Ville*, not content to overthrow the Opinion of the new Philosophers touching the Nature of Body by the Authority of Councils, endeavor'd to confute it by Arguments from Reason; and, to do him justice, he says the utmost that can be advanc'd to prove Extension is not the Essence of Matter. 'Twas on this Article Mr. *Bayle* encounter'd him, who aiming at bringing his Pupils to maintain rational Theses, took for his Subject that Chapter of Mr. *de la Ville's* Book,

in

in which he endeavors to prove by natural Reasons, that Extension is not the Essence of Matter. And because Mr. *de la Ville*, to compass this end, does little more than enervate, as much as possibly he can, the Reasons by which Messieurs *Clersefier*, *Robault*, and the Author of the *Search after Truth*, have maintain'd that Extension is the Essence of Matter; Mr. Bayle contents himself with corroborating the Reasons of these Gentlemen, and destroying all Mr. *de la Ville's* Exceptions and Subtletys. He bends his greatest strength to prove, that the Penetration of the Parts of Matter is impossible.

Mr. Bayle had this Dissertation reprinted in *Holland*, with some other curious Pieces, of which I shall take notice in their proper place.

The Comet which appear'd in the month of *December* in the same year, furnish'd him an occasion of writing a new Treatise. As People had an extraordinary Opinion of his Knowledge and Judgment, he found himself continually teaz'd with Questions concerning it, proceeding either from Curiosity or Fear. He did all he cou'd to quiet those who were disturb'd at this pre-

tended evil Prefage, but gain'd very little on 'em by Philosophical Reasonings. Still they reply'd, that God expos'd these strange Phenomena o' purpose to give Sinners time to prevent their impending Ruin by Repentance: So he thought 'twou'd be in vain to reason any longer, unless he cou'd produce some Argument to shew that the Divine Attributes permitted not the destining Comets to such an end. He apply'd himself to meditate upon it, and quickly lit on this Theological Argument, *That if Comets were Presages of Evil, God had work'd Miracles to confirm Idolatry.* He did not remember he had ever met with it in any Book, or heard it in Conversation. This made it appear to him perfectly new, and gave him the first thought of writing a Letter on the Subject, to be inserted in the *Mercurie Galant*. He endeavor'd not to exceed the bounds of such a Letter; but the Abundance of Matter wou'd not permit his being short enough, and oblig'd him to take other measures, and look on his Letter as a Piece which must be publish'd apart. He affected Brevity no longer; he enlarg'd at his leisure on every thing that offer'd,

offer'd, still keeping Mr. *Vise* in sight. He resolv'd to send him his Letter, and pray him to give it to his Printer, and get either Mr. *de la Reinie*'s Licence, if that might serve, as it had for printing several other Treatises on Comets ; or the Royal Privilege, if nothing less wou'd do. He kept the Manuscript in his hands for some time, without knowing the Author's Name ; and when one call'd on him to inquire about it, he answer'd, That he understood by a Person who had read it over, that Mr. *de la Reinie* wou'd ne'er answer for the Consequences of it ; and that the Approbation of Doctors must be had, before they sollicit a Royal Licence ; which was a tedious painful Undertaking, for which he had not leisure enough. His Friend recover'd the Manuscript : And as the Suppression of the Academy of *Sedan* was the occasion of Mr. Bayle's removing to *Holland*, he thought no more of printing his Letter on Comets at *Paris*.

The King of *France* having resolv'd 1681.
by little and little to extinguish the
Reformation in his Dominions, began
some time before to suppress the Aca-
demys belonging to the Protestants :
That

That of *Sedan* had the same fate with the rest. Mr. Bayle being out of business, resolv'd to quit the place, and make a trip to *Paris*; where he arriv'd without knowing whether he shou'd go on to *Rotterdam*, where he had some hopes given him of an Establishment, or go over to *England*, or continue in *France*. Before he left *Sedan*, the Count de la Bourlie, who was Governor, and who had a very particular esteem for Mr. Bayle, omitted nothing that might engage him to turn Catholick. He let him in a word understand, *That 'twas wholly in his own power to make his Fortune, and that 'twas full time for him to think on't.* Mr. Bayle absolutely rejected the Proposition. He was soon after call'd to *Rotterdam*, and procur'd a Settlement for Mr. *Jurieu* in the same Town, as you shall see, my Lord, in the Account I'm going to transcribe; and which may serve to give a juster Idea of the Spirit of this Minister.

The College of *Sedan* was no sooner dissolv'd, than Mr. *Jurieu*, much concern'd at the loss of the best part of his Fortune, began to look out for a better Income than that of Minister, which was still left him. His first Thought

Thought was to acquaint the Visitors of the College of *Groningen*, that if they had such a place to give him as they offer'd him formerly, he was ready to accept it. But the Prayers and earnest Instances of *Mademoiselle Mary du Moulin* his Aunt, a Person of great worth, seconded by those of several other good People of *Sedan*, prevail'd on him to promise he wou'd not forsake his Church, at a time when it stood in greater need of its Pastors than ever. But as his proud peevish Temper had render'd him very odious to the Roman Catholicks of *Sedan*, and his affecting to distinguish himself by Starts of Zeal, which did the Reform'd a deal of prejudice, had provok'd some of the Magistrates against him; he resum'd the Design of getting away betimes: and remembering the *Walloon* Church of *Rotterdam* had formerly desir'd him for their Minister, he turn'd his eyes that way. Mr. Bayle, who had expectations in the same Town, by the Favor of a Magistrate, procur'd him by one of his Friends, was overjoy'd at this Overture; and so earnestly engag'd his Friend in this Affair too, that he prevail'd on the same Patron to issue a Vocation

cation to Mr. *Jurieu*. Mr. *Bayle*'s Friend was one Mr. *Van Zoelen*, a young Gentleman of *Rotterdam*, and a Relation to Mr. *Van Zoelen* Burgomaster of the same Town. This young man had lodg'd with Mr. *Bayle* at *Sedan*, improv'd himself considerably in his Studys by his Conversation, and had entertain'd a thorow Friendship for him; so that the very day the Order for suppressing the Academy came to *Sedan*, he took a Resolution of sending it to Mr. *Paets*, his Relation, one of the Counsellors of the City of *Rotterdam*, a very learned and considerable Person, and a Lover of Men of Letters. He let him know by the same Post that Mr. *Bayle* was out of Business, said a great many kind things of him; and receiv'd an Answer expressing a great Inclination to serve him. Mr. *Bayle* wrote upon this occasion a Letter to this worthy Person; who soon after return'd him an Answer, That the Town of *Rotterdam* had granted him a Pension, with a Licence to teach Philosophy there.

Mr. *Van Zoelen* and Mr. *Bayle* had left *Sedan* before the Arrival of this Answer, the latter to go to *Paris*, the other to go strait to *Rotterdam*, and solicit
Mr.

Mr. *Jurieu*'s Affair in Person, which Mr. *Bayle* had earnestly recommended to him. He spoke on't to his Relation in so pressing a manner (for Mr. *Bayle* had, among other things, cleverly insinuated, that he must lose no time for fear other Employments shou'd offer for Mr. *Jurieu*) that this illustrious Magistrate bestir'd himself immediately to remove all Obstacles. There was none at all with regard to Mr. *Bayle*; so the Letter wrote him by Mr. *Paets* signify'd, that his Business was settled, and Mr. *Jurieu*'s in a fair way. Mr. *Bayle* then being at *Paris*, Mr. *Jurieu* receiv'd the Letter; but instead of sending it to Mr. *Bayle*, as 'twas all the reason in the world he shou'd, he contented himself with taking notice to him in general of the substance on't, nor ever deliver'd it after. As Mr. *Bayle* was a very easy Friend, who turn'd away his Thoughts from every thing, which if div'd into, might tempt him to judg hardly of Persons, he truly had some suspicion that this Letter was wrote in Terms too obliging for him, and not quite so obliging to the Person who kept it in his hands; yet he did not dwell on it, not even in a Thought.

Whilst

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Whilst Mr. *Paets* at *Rotterdam* was removing all the Obstacles to Mr. *Jurieu's* Vocation, Mr. *Bayle* was inform'd he had engag'd himself to the Church of *Roan*; so that he was mightily surpriz'd in his Journey for *Holland*, to hear that Mr. *Jurieu* was broke up from *Sedan* with some precipitation, and making the best of his way into *Holland*. He thought he cou'd not be very far from *Rotterdam*, when asking about him at *Maastricht*, they inform'd him he was actually there. Mr. *Bayle* made but a short stay at *Maastricht*, and upon his Arrival at *Rotterdam*, was receiv'd in the most obliging manner imaginable by the Family of Mr. *Van Zoelen*, very considerable in this Town; and by Mr. *Paets*, who had procur'd him a Philosophy and History Professor's Chair in the illustrious School, which the worshipful Magistrates of *Rotterdam* had just founded. Mr. *Paets* was but newly return'd from his Embassy to *Spain*: He was a Person of extraordinary Merit, no less distinguish'd by his Acquaintance with all the most profound Parts of Learning, than by his great Ability in managing the Business of the State, as your Lordship shall see more particularly hereafter. He was Brother-in-law

in law to Mr. *Cornelius de Wit*, and consider'd as Head of the Party which oppos'd the House of *Orange*; and therefore it was not without some difficulty that he was admitted again into the Magistracy of *Rotterdam* after his return from *Spain*. This great Man was so charm'd with the Beauty of Mr. Bayle's Wit, that he enter'd him into the number of his most intimate Friends; and to give him beforehand some particular mark of his Esteem, he was pleas'd, upon his bare recommendation, to imploy all his credit to get Mr. *Jurieu* a Settlement in *Rotterdam*, insomuch that he was soon after made Professor in Divinity there.

Some months after Mr. Bayle revis'd his Letter on Comets, and having made several Additions, he printed it under the following Title: *A Letter to M. L. A. D. C. a Doctor of Sorbon; in which is shewn, by several Reasons drawn from Philosophy and Divinity, That Comets are not Presages of Evil: with Reflections Moral and Political, several Historical Observations, and a Confutation of some reigning popular Errors.* Mr. Bayle having wrote this Letter with a Design, as I observ'd before, of having it printed at *Paris*, he was oblig'd to assume the
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Stile of a Roman Catholick, and imitate the Language and Elogys of Mr. *de Vise* on the publick Affairs. This Conduct was absolutely necessary for any who wou'd appear in Print at *Paris*, and he thought his imitating the *Mer-cure Galant* in some of his Flights, wou'd help to recommend it to a Licence. As he had taken the utmost Precautions to conceal his being the Author of this *Letter on Comets*, which was printed in *Holland* some months after his Arrival, he made no Alterations in the Stile or Language: This he thought wou'd effectually prevent Peoples imagining that 'twas wrote by a Person who had abdicated *France* for his Religion.

But notwithstanding all his Precautions, he was soon discover'd to be the Author. Mr. *Leers* his Bookseller shew'd the Manuscript to Mr. *Paets*, and told him from whom he had it; and Mr. *Paets* believ'd he shou'd do Mr. *Bayle* a piece of Service, by making it publick. On the whole, tho Mr. *Bayle*'s Design was properly to undeceive the World, with regard to the common Prejudices for Presage; yet he had the Art of enlivening his Matter by Digressions so engaging, and by such a variety of fine and judicious

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judicious Reflections, that from that time he began to be look'd on as one of the best Pens of *Europe*. This Work was no less admir'd in *France* than elsewhere, tho 'twas easily seen that the Praises there were only from the Teeth outwards, and that they cou'd not but perceive in it several lively home Strokes at the *Roman* Religion. Mr. *Paets* then cou'd not make Mr. *Bayle* known to more advantage, than by discovering him to be the Author of the Letter upon Comets. Mr. *Jurieu* among others came to know it by his means, either at the first or second hand; and speaking on't to Mr. *Bayle* with a small Reproach, that others were let into the Secret and he not, Mr. *Bayle* declar'd to him how the whole matter came about, and enter'd with him into an explication of some Points in the Book. The Work was then so much to Mr. *Jurieu*'s mind, that he advis'd his Friends to buy and read it, recommending it as a very good Piece; but withal, cou'd not forbear harboring a secret resentment, jealous, as he ever was, of the Reputation of his Friends.

Much about this time Mr. *Maimbourg* publish'd his *History of Calvinism*.

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The Life of Mr. Bayle.

This Author had liv'd for above fifty Years in a Society of Jesuits, and with a great deal of Distinction; but the Superiors oblig'd him now to march off, to prevent any Umbrage from the Court of *Rome*, which was highly displeas'd at some of his Writings. This serv'd but to raise his Reputation higher; for the King of *France*, who at that time study'd only how to mortify the Pope, took him into his Royal Protection, and gave him a very considerable Pension. He had a deal of Wit, and a boundless stock of fine Images for giving a hundred pleasing dextrous turns to Affairs; his Style, tho somewhat diffuse, was sprightly and shining, and here and there one fell in with very beautiful flights of Eloquence. But tho he pretended to the Character of a Historian, he troubl'd himself very little about the faithful part. He even misrepresented matters most an end, either to gratify his own Passion, or to flatter the Court from whence he deriv'd so many Favors. Such being the Genius of Mr. *Maimbourg*, you can't think it strange, my Lord, that there shou'd be a general demand for his Works. His *History of Calvinism* was read with so much the
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more gusto, as it had been expected of a good while, and as it turn'd besides on matters of the highest Importance. The Design was to pronounce Judgment on the Spirit and Conduct of the Reform'd in *France*, ever since they had separated from the Church of *Rome*. Mr. *Maimbourg* discharg'd all his Gall on 'em, and employ'd the utmost Artifices of his Pen, to draw upon 'em the Contempt and Indignation of the Catholics. Mr. *Bayle* cou'd not bear the Unfaithfulness which ran thro the whole Relation, nor the hideous Picture he had drawn of the Reformation; and in the Apprehension that it might in some measure hasten the Ruin of the Reform'd, he resolv'd to oppose an Answer to it, which might fully vindicate 'em from all his Calumnys. But to compass his end, he did not think it necessary to answer in Form, and enter into a nice Discussion of Facts. 'Twas enough, he thought, for ruining Mr. *Maimbourg's* whole Scheme, to make some general Observations on his Book, and to shew what kind of Judgment we must pass on things, if we suppose 'em such as this Author represents. The little Certainty he

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had

had found in History, made him pitch upon this Method as the surest and properest for confounding his Adversary. He had observ'd, that all Partys misrepresent Facts in such a manner, especially where Religion is concern'd, that 'tis an infinite trouble to sift out the Truth. Each side displays every thing that's most for its advantage, and dissembles, or but faintly mentions whatever is not in its favor; and how is't possible to separate Truth from Falshood under so many fraudulent Disguises? Such a Discussion is so tedious, so painful, and generally so insignificant, that Mr. Bayle had a great deal of Reason to avoid it.

His Answer came out in June 1682. under the Title of *A General Criticism on P. Maimbourg's History of Calvinism*. You, my Lord, are too well acquainted with Mr. Bayle's turn of Wit, not to judg that this Piece must be the farthest in the World from a sour splenetick Criticism. 'Twas properly a kind of toying, but fill'd with good Sense, and fitter to embarass and deconcert his Adversary than the gravest serious Argument. Mr. Bayle's perfect Acquaintance with all modern Writings had furnish'd him with a
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thousand Particulars of the Life and Disputes of Mr. *Maimbourg*, which open'd a large Field for the finest and most pointed Raillery. Accordingly this Work was so well receiv'd by the Publick, that the whole Edition was bought up in four months. The Author was enquir'd for with great Earnestness; at last People cast their Eyes on one of the best Pens of the Protestant Party in *France*. No body ever dream'd of searching for him in *Holland*, amidst the Dust of a College. Besides, tho Mr. *Bayle* did not industriously design it, he gave the Stile of this Criticism an Air so different from that of the Letter on Comets, that no one suspected the two Works were the Production of one and the same Pen. A pure Accident drew Mr. *Bayle* from behind the Curtain: for answering the Letter of an Anonymous, which his Book-feller had sent him, he forgot to desire him not to deliver the Original but a written Copy. This Anonymous, a Friend of Mr. *Claude's* the Son, ask'd, as he shew'd him Mr. *Bayle's* Answer, whether he knew the Hand. Mr. *Claude* telling him whose it was,

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The Life of Mr. Bayle.

was, 'twas in vain for Mr. Bayle to make a Mystery any longer of his being the Author of the Criticism. The second Edition of it was finish'd in *November* following. Mr. Bayle enlarg'd it to double the Bulk, yet keeping strictly within the Limits he had prescrib'd himself. I mean, he did not enter into a Discussion of Facts, nor Researches of History, such as might manifest the Innocence of the Reform'd, and the Unfairness of Mr. Maimbourg.

Mr. Jurieu also undertook to answer Mr. Maimbourg, and accordingly compos'd a Book, bulky enough indeed, entitl'd, *An Apology for the Reformers, for the Reformation, and for the Reform'd, divided into four Parts, against a Libel entitl'd, The History of Calvinism by Mr. Maimbourg.* Unfortunately the Publick did not give this Work so good a Reception as it had given Mr. Bayle's, nor call'd for it with the same Eagerness. Mr. Bayle's Critique had been admir'd by the best Judges, and in *France* the very Catholics cou'd not refuse it their Praises. It's true, the Ministers of State were touch'd at it to the quick, yet this hinder'd not their doing Justice to the Author. But they were very far from
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judging so advantageously of Mr. Jurieu's Apology. Give me leave, my Lord, to relate in this place what Mr. Menage said of both in the Conferences he held at his own House, and of which his Friends have preserv'd us some Remains. *It's a fine Piece, says this learned Man, a fine Piece, this Criticism on P. Maimbourg's History of Calvinism, and he himself cou'd not deny it his Esteem. He has own'd so much to me, tho he generally affected to speak of it as of a Book he had not read: Bating what relates to Religion, all Mr. Bayle says is sprightly and rational. I had the Curiosity to read what Mr. Jurieu has wrote on the same Subject: there's a great deal of difference between the Men; Mr. Bayle's Book is that of a Gentleman and a well-bred Man; Mr. Jurieu's is all Cant and Impertinence. It's a paltry Repetition of all that insipid Stuff which Du Moulin and others have said against the Catholick Religion. Mr. Jurieu was enrag'd at Mr. Bayle's standing in competition with him, and much more at the different Judgments pass'd upon their Works. The Friendship he had for him was no longer proof against his Pride; it began from that time forward*

to grow cold; and he has fully shewn in the sequel, how far the Resentment of an Author may be push'd when naturally splenetick, and intoxicated with a high Opinion of himself.

About this time Mr. Bayle gave a second Edition of his Letter on Comets: But as he ever had an Aversion to long Titles, he chang'd it to that of *Miscellaneous Reflections on occasion of the Comet*, &c. This new Edition was much larger than the former, and Mr. Bayle divided the Work into several short Sections, to give his Reader the more Rests, and the Convenience of resuming or drawing Breath when he pleas'd. He also gave himself the trouble of translating the *Latin* Passages into *French*, for the Benefit of a great many honest Gentlemen and People of good Sense, who deal not in the Originals.

1684.

The Year following, that is, in 1684: he publish'd *A Collection of several curious Pieces, concerning the Principles of Mr. Descartes*. This Collection consists of six intire Pieces; the first is a kind of *Concordat* between the Fathers of the Oratory and the Jesuits, in which those engage themselves to certain Conditions in teaching their Pupils, which are
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thought requisite by these ; and among other things they promise to renounce the Cartesian Philosophy, of which they began to be the avow'd Patrons. The second Piece contains some Reflections on this Condescension of the Fathers of the Oratory. The third is an Examination of Mr. *de la Ville's* Book : this Author pretended, that all the new Philosophers, whether *Cartesians* or *Gassendists*, ruin'd the Mystery of Transubstantiation, by maintaining that the Essence of Matter consists in Extension : And as his Book made a mighty Noise in *France*, and did the *Cartesians* much Mischief, as I have already observ'd ; Mr. *Bernier*, a known Admirer of Mr. *Gassendi*, began to be in pain, and compos'd that Explication in which he endeavors to reconcile the Principles of his Philosophy with the Decisions of the Church of *Rome*. The fourth is the Work of a *Cartesian*, in Answer to the same Mr. *de la Ville*, and in favor of *P. Malebranche*. Not but this great Philosopher had himself given an Answer to this Author, which was afterwards inserted in his *Search after Truth* ; but as Mr. *de la Ville* seem'd more animated against him than against any

any other *Cartesian*, 'twas thought fit that one of the Party shou'd keep his back hand. These four Pieces are follow'd by a *Latin* Dissertation of Mr. Bayle's, which I had the Honor of mentioning to your Lordship on another Occasion; and by some Theses of Philosophy by the same Hand, wherein is maintain'd, among other things, that neither Time, Place, nor Motion, have yet bin defin'd, but in a manner altogether inexplicable. It's likewise observ'd there, that the Reflexion of Bodys proceeds from an Elastick Virtue in 'em, since Motion is infinitely divisible; and by reason of this Divisibility, no Body in a state of rest, can hinder another which is in motion, from moving in a right Line; which Mr. *Descartes* it seems was not aware of. At the end of this Collection are some *Metaphysical Meditations*, printed by a Disciple of *P. Malebranche*, in 1678. under the borrow'd Name of *William Wander*. There we find an Abstract of the *Cartesian* Metaphysicks, and every thing that's valuable in *Descartes's* Meditations. Mr. Bayle even thinks, that the matter is better digested here, brought into a narrower Compass, and workt up to a better

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better consistence than in the Writings of that celebrated Philosopher, and carry'd some lengths further. That single Meditation in which he examines what Liberty is, is a Theme in his Opinion, on which the greatest Divines might exercise their Talents. *Instead of wrangling, says he, on the Nature of Free-will, which they always suppose, without amusing themselves with the Proofs, they ought in the first place to prove there is such a thing ; the Question may be of more Importance, and have a greater depth than they are aware.*

About this time the Visitors of the College of *Franeker*, who had known Mr. Bayle by his *Reflections on Comets*, offer'd him a Philosophy Professor's Chair with them. But tho this Post was more beneficial, and indeed more creditable than that of *Roterdam*, he thank'd 'em for the Honor they did him, but was loth to remove from his Friends at *Roterdam*, hoping he shou'd meet Mr. *Basnage* there, whom he believ'd the Persecution wou'd soon waite thither, as it accordingly hapned.

The Design of informing the Publick by a kind of Journal, of the most curious Occurrences in the Republick of Letters,

Letters, had been found so instructive and agreeable, that no sooner had Mr. Sallo, a Counsellor of the Parliament of *Paris*, publish'd his first Essays of this Project, in 1665. but several other Nations express their Satisfaction in it, either by translating the *Journal des Savans*, which this ingenious Person had printed every Week, or by publishing something of the same kind.

This Emulation had sensibly increas'd ever since that time, insomuch as it extended it self, not only from Nation to Nation, but from one Science to another. Mr. Bayle, who understood the Usefulness and Advantage of such Journals best of any body, was mightily surpriz'd, that *Holland*, which had always signaliz'd it self in the Improvement of the noble Arts, had not hitherto taken part in the general Emulation. His wonder increas'd the more when he consider'd, that this Country was as well if not better furnish'd with Books than any part of the World; that the People were naturally industrious and inquisitive; that their Voyages to the *Indies* help'd 'em to the Knowledge of a thousand Rarities and Things utterly unknown to other Nations: And

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lastly, that the Press was so open, that Authors from all parts of *Europe* had recourse to *Holland*, when discourag'd by the Difficulty of obtaining Licences at home. All these Considerations had tempted him more than once to write a Journal or History of the Learned; but he soon gave over the Design when he consider'd the Time and infinite Application which such an Undertaking requir'd; and liv'd always in hopes, that some body else wou'd present for the purpose. Accordingly the first Month of this Year there appear'd a kind of Journal, entitl'd, the *Mer-cure Savant*. Mr. de Blegny, Author of the *Journal or History of Physick*, and of several Treatises of Chirurgery, compos'd it at *Paris*, and sent the Sheets to Mr. Gaultier, a Physician of *Niort*, who liv'd at *Amsterdam*, and got 'em printed there. One wou'd think he undertook this Journal only to cry up his own Works, and damn those of all other Writers. 'Twas a happy Thought, and I cou'd name your Lordship some Journalists of the blue Ribbon, who have improv'd upon the Example. However something there was so irregular in this new Journal, that

that 'twas dropt the very next Month after. No sooner had Mr. Bayle seen the *Mercure Savant*, but he felt his former Passion kindle in him anew, and with more Force than ever. The Plan of this he observ'd was defective, and he was exceedingly shock'd at the visible Design in it of running down illustrious Men. Mr. *Jurieu*, who was privy to Mr. Bayle's Thoughts in this point, and who from a sight of the *Mercure Savant* comprehended the Advantages which might be made of such a Journal, urg'd him extremely to prosecute the Design, hoping to have in him a trusty Pen for forming the Panegyrick of all his own Books. He flatter'd himself too with the Hopes of inserting in it now and then some Memoirs against those who had the misfortune not to be in his good Graces; and was besides very desirous Mr. Bayle shou'd be engag'd in a matter, which he was sure wou'd prevent his ever interfering with himself.

Mr. Bayle therefore having resolv'd to enter the Lists as a Journalist, began with the Month of *March* to give us his *Account of the Republick of Letters*. This of all his Works was that which the Publick coveted most, and which perhaps

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perhaps was most universally relish'd. All was sprightly and animated in his Extracts; he had the knack of diversifying his matter agreeably, and conveying the Idea of a Book in a few words, without tiring the Reader by an ill Choice, or by tedious pall'd Reflections. He was discreet and reserv'd in his Characters, loth to discourage his Authors, or to expose himself by prostituting his Praises. 'Twas thought tho that he prais'd too much in his first Journals, and this oblig'd him to be afterwards more reserv'd in this particular. Very far from the Spirit of most Authors, whenever he was advertis'd of a Fault he took a Pleasure in acknowledging it to the Publick. This was an effect of his extreme Modesty, and of his ardent Love of Truth. I shan't stop here, my Lord, to collect the Elogys given Mr. Bayle on occasion of this Journal. I shall only observe, that all the other Journalists endeavor to copy, but none as we can see comes near him.

The second Edition of his *Criticism on the History of Calvinism* being sold off in a very short time, Mr. Bayle was oblig'd to publish a third. As he believ'd

liev'd this might be the last that would sell, he cou'd willingly have brought it as near Perfection as possible; but he durst not, for fear of disobliging those who had bought it twice before, and because People often murmur at new Editions, review'd, amended, and enlarg'd, which take off the Value of the former, and give Persons some regret that they laid out their Mony in 'em. He took care then that this Edition shou'd not much differ from the Second, and publish'd an Advertisement, that all who had the Second Edition might keep to it, and that the Third ought not to give 'em any Temptation. Yet he cou'd not forbear making some Additions and Amendments, which render'd it much preferable to the former. He made some change in the Disposition of the Letters (for I forgot, my Lord, to tell you, that Mr. Bayle compos'd this Work by way of Letters) but he chiefly apply'd himself to the polishing the Stile, by striking out all chiming or ambiguous Expressions. Mr. Bayle had study'd his own Language to a nicety, and no one better knew the difficulty of writing in it to Perfection.

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Perfection. *They who thorowly understand our Language, says he, and who have a nice Ear, own there's nothing harder than writing justly in French, so as to avoid all chiming Expressions, Consonances, and Phrases, where the same word may be refer'd to several other Phrases, and admit of different Senses, some of which may sometimes be ridiculous. The new French Grammarians, adds he, lay down Rules which 'tis impossible to follow, and which deserve to be lookt on as the bane of Authors. They have made the French the difficultest of all Languages to excel in; and therefore we find so few who write by their Rules. We have scarce an Author whose Prose is not fill'd with Verses, Cadences, disagreeable Periods, Consonances, chiming Sounds, and continual Equivoques. They who wou'd avoid Equivoques, are oblig'd to range their Words according to the natural Order of the Thoughts; and in this Situation, which is one and the same in all Men, 'tis impossible to avoid chiming, because the French Tongue does not over-abound in Words, or in different Terminations.*

Some time after Mr. Bayle publish'd a 1685.
kind of a Continuation of the Work,

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which I have now spoke of, entitl'd, *New Letters of the Author of the general Criticism on P. Maimbourg's History of Calvinism, first Part; wherein, justifying some Passages of the Criticism, which seem chargeable with Contradiction, fallacious Reasonings, and other Defects of the same kind, several curious Subjects are occasionally handled, which have a relation to these matters.* In his Advice to the Reader, Mr. Bayle owns, that after he had with much difficulty consented to the printing it, he was often tempted to stop the Impression, considering how rare a thing it is not to degenerate, when, after a Book has had some sort of Success, one ventures to give a Continuation. Pieces of this kind, adds he, almost always import, *That the Author has not kept up to his Character, that he had done well to have stop'd where he was, that he shou'd have known his own Strength, and that he was wrong to hazard his not answering the Opinion the World had conceiv'd of him.* He afterwards shews by some just Reflections, that these Judgments may sometimes be reasonable; but for the most part, if a Continuation is not thought equal with the first

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first Work, 'tis not so much the Fault of the Author as the Reader. But as the Disgrace is still the same, he concludes, that if one excepts a small Number of Writers, who have had the good Fortune to prepossess the Publick, the rest have reason to dread the Comparison between Work and Work, if the first Part has not altogether displeas'd.

“ But, continues he, if ever any had
“ cause to dread the Comparison, surely
“ I have; because I'm now destitute
“ of a thousand outward Circumstan-
“ ces, which in all likelihood produc'd
“ the whole Success of the *General Cri-*
“ *ticism*, if it be true that it was not al-
“ together disesteem'd. 'Twas at first
“ ascrib'd to one of our most celebrated
“ Pens; and this Opinion spreading from
“ place to place, prepossess the World to
“ such a degree (for he is one of those
“ happily privileg'd Authors) that the
“ Book was read with the most favora-
“ ble Dispositions; which prevented se-
“ veral Readers perceiving, that it was
“ not a Production solid enough to come
“ from such a Hand. They who did
“ perceive it, chang'd only to other as
“ favorable Dispositions, arising from

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

“ the Civility paid to an unknown Vir-
 “ gin Author. The Pleasure of guesſing,
 “ the Cuſtom of magnifying what we
 “ are Strangers to, and a hundred other
 “ Devices of the Imagination, amus’d
 “ the World, and made ’em ſpeak advan-
 “ tageouſly of the Book. What ſhall I
 “ ſay of Mr. *Maimbourg*’s Reputation,
 “ which alone was ſufficient to excite
 “ the Curioſity of the Publick for a *Cri-*
 “ *ticiſm on his Hiſtory of Calviniſm*, eſpe-
 “ cially at the time he wrote it? The
 “ Hiſtorys of this Jeſuit took mightily,
 “ they were read in all Countrys; that
 “ of Calviniſm nearly concern’d a con-
 “ ſiderable Body in *Europe*: the Pro-
 “ ceedings of the Pope againſt him had
 “ drawn the Eyes of all thoſe upon him
 “ more than ever, who were given to
 “ reading; People expected with Impa-
 “ tience what the Calviniſts wou’d ſay
 “ to this new Writer of the Hiſtory
 “ of their Religion; the whole Party
 “ wiſh’d paſſionately, that ſome body
 “ wou’d confute this Man; and their
 “ Wiſhes for his ſucceeding in’t diſ-
 “ poſ’d ’em powerfully to believe, and
 “ to make others believe, ſo the Work
 “ were tolerable, that he had admira-
 “ bly defended the Cauſe; laſt of all,

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“ contraband Books had bin very rare,
“ tho the Persecution of the *Hugonots*
“ had made a great noise.

After this Mr. *Bayle* shews he was now destitute of the help of all these favorable Circumstances, and consequently had reason to fear, that his Readers might look on his Continuation of the *Criticism* as a younger Brother, and a Dishonor to the Head of the Family: and from hence proceeded the Temptation, which he was often under to stop it in the Impression. “ If you’d
“ know, adds he, how I conquer’d so
“ plausible a Temptation, you must
“ imagine a Man who, searching after
“ that blest Independence on which
“ *Epictetus* has given us such admirable Lessons, has a Soul Philosophical
“ enough to be easily comforted under
“ Disgrace, and perhaps need no Comfort for the Disadvantages this new
“ Collection of Letters may fall under.
“ And what, pray, shou’d we gain by
“ Study, if we continu’d, like other
“ Men, in a vile Servitude to the Publick, I mean in a Dependence on the
“ Opinions of others? No, we must
“ not lie down in this Slavery; yet
D 3 “ ’twere

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

“ ’twere doing as much, to suppress
 “ Books half printed, for fear the Rea-
 “ der shou’d say this or that. We
 “ must e’en let ’em take their For-
 “ tune, and convince our selves by an
 “ Experiment, that we are free.

This Work contains two and twenty Letters. In the first Mr. Bayle makes some Reflections upon Authors not bearing to be criticiz’d on: He relates the Objections sent to him against his *Critique Generale*, and notes those which he intends to confute. The second Letter turns upon Authors contradicting themselves. The third contains several Miscellaneous matters. In the fourth he treats of the Quality of *Great Man*, and the ill Effects of Praise. In the fifth he applies to the famous Mr. Arnauld, what was advanc’d in the former Letter. In the sixth he examines the Example of JESUS CHRIST and his Apostles, alledg’d to justify Authors who write in a violent Stile. The seventh shews, that angry Authors don’t go unpunish’d, and assigns the reason of it. Mr. Bayle speaks in the eighth of some Edicts publish’d in *France* against the Reform’d. In the ninth he treats of the Rights of an erroneous Conscience, and
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of Errors attended with Sincerity. He justifies in the tenth some Remarks he had made on a Letter of Mr. *Pelisson* touching the Conversions of the Reform'd in *France*. In the eleventh and twelfth he answers what Mr. *Arnauld* had publish'd, to prove the Sincerity of the new Converts. He speaks in the thirteenth of the Motives of the Nobility of *France*, as well for rejecting as for embracing the Reformation. In the fourteenth he speaks of the Marriage of Bishops who chang'd their Religion. In the sixteenth he examines Philosophically, why Men are less fond of Wedlock than Women, and what's the cause of the Love of Parents for their Children. The seventeenth contains Reflections on the Usefulness of Jealousy. The eighteenth has several Miscellaneous Observations. In the nineteenth he speaks of a Passage of *Brantome*, which he had struck out of the Third Edition of his *Critique Generale*; and of the Principles of Morality which are scatter'd in Mr. *Maimbourg's* Historys. In the twentieth he has some Reflections on the Learning of Preachers, and on Mr. *Maimbourg's* Omission of the last Prince of *Condé*, in the Elogy of his

D 4 Ancestors.

Ancestors. The twenty first Letter is written against the Author, by one Mr. *Crisante*; and here again the Marriage of the first Reformers is spoke to, who quitted the Cloyster, or chang'd from the state of Priesthood. And Mr. *Bayle* in the twenty second, answers an Objection contain'd in the preceding Letter.

Here, my Lord, is in general the Subject of this Work; for 'twere troublesom entring into a detail of all the Matters treated in it. You'l easily judg, by what I have said, that Mr. *Bayle* does here sometimes give a full swing to his Imagination, and often studys only how to instruct his Reader by amusing him agreeably. This was the end he propos'd himself; and in this Disposition one must read several of his new Letters, to pass an equitable Judgment on 'em, and do the Author all the Justice he deserves. Accordingly he fails not to advertise the Publick, that his Design was not to write like a grave Doctor, or for Men of Learning, but for a world of People, who seek, properly speaking, only an innocent Amusement, which may improve, but not fatigue. Yet so few had taken him right,
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that he was forc'd to complain on't :
“ It must be own'd, says he, in his
“ *Republique des Lettres* for the Month
“ of *July*, 1685. that most Readers
“ are strange Folks : One may take
“ the pains to advertise 'em of a thou-
“ sand things, recommend this or that
“ to 'em in the most humble manner ;
“ they'l have their own way and their
“ humor nevertheless. There have bin
“ Novels written on the fruitless Pre-
“ cautions of Mothers and Husbands ;
“ I'm amaz'd no body has shew'd the
“ Folly of the like Precautions in our
“ Gentlemen Authors. I know one,
“ adds he, whose Work has not bin
“ out of the Press above six Months,
“ who had neglected nothing to secure
“ himself from rash Judgments : In
“ his Preface he had given the most
“ essential Cautions ; and where he had
“ any mistrust of his Reader, he had
“ expressly warn'd him, that his Sense
“ might be mistaken, unless care were
“ taken to examine what he said alto-
“ gether. He had even carry'd his Pre-
“ cautions so far, as to set down his
“ real Opinion in Capital Letters, and
“ in some sort to menace those who
“ shou'd misunderstand him, as being
“ left

“ left inexcusable ; yet all to no purpose.
 “ He has since bin made sensible, that
 “ some even of the Tribe of Authors
 “ have gone into the noose, from which
 “ he had taken so much pains to pre-
 “ serve ’em. To return, Mr. Bayle de-
 sign’d in the beginning, to continue this
First Part of his new Letters, by an
 Addition of two Parts more, the first
 of which was intended to satisfy those
 who said, he had in his *Critique Gene-
 rale* too slightly touch’d some things
 which deserv’d a greater Consideration,
 as the Conference at *Poissi*, the first tak-
 ing up of Arms, the Version of the
 Psalms, &c. And the second to explain
 some Difficultys of Controversy. Nay,
 he had of a long time prepar’d the Mat-
 ters for each of these Parts ; but his o-
 ther Occupations hinder’d his giving
 ’em the finishing stroke.

I ought not to forget, that he began
 the second Year of his *Account of the
 Republick of Letters*, by a small change
 which put ’em out of the number of
 Anonymous Works ; I mean, he added
 to the Title of the Month of *March*,
 1685. the following words, *By Mr.
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 tory at Rotterdam.* This he did to shew,
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that the Author of this Journal was one of the Professors of that *illustrious School*, which the worshipful Magistrates of *Rotterdam* had the Generosity to found there in 1681. and that if the Publick receiv'd any Information, or useful Entertainment by this *Account*, they might know 'twas wholly owing to these Gentlemen, since 'twas to them the Author was oblig'd for that happy Leisure which permitted him to apply himself to so hard an Undertaking. He wou'd also testify by this means, tho he did not dedicate in form, yet that he consecrated it intirely to 'em. He who has any thing of a genteel Spirit, studys how to return on his Benefactors that Glory he derives from 'em, and is never easy till he finds out some way or other of making his Acknowledgments publick.

Mr. *Van Paets* was then in *England* upon the Business of the *States General*; and as the Question concerning Toleration was much agitated there about that time, he wrote a *Latin* Letter on the occasion to Mr. *Bayle*, giving him his Thoughts on a Subject of such Importance. This Letter was printed soon

soon after under this Title: H. V. P. ad B— *de nuperis Angliae motibus Epistola, in qua de diversorum a publica Religione circa divina sentientium differitur Tolerantia.*

Mr. *Van Paets* began his Letter with the Praises of the Prince, who was then upon the Throne, for having never violated the Instincts of his own Conscience; and was in hopes, that as he was not one of those Kings, who reckon the Reputation of not being as good as their word, one of the least Misfortunes, but on the contrary, had all along religiously kept his own, he wou'd punctually observe the Assurances he had given his Protestant Subjects. After this kind of Preamble he attacks those who maintain, that Kings ought to allow only one Religion in their Dominions, and the People suffer no King who is not of their Religion. He maintain'd, that these were most pernicious Maxims with regard to Sovereigns and to Subjects, and that they cou'd only spring from a Corruption of Heart. He afterwards endeavors to confute the Reasons which Politicians and Priests alledg against a Toleration: and after having shewn the Impertinence

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nence of the Doctrine of Infallibility, which the Church of *Rome* arrogates, he concludes with an Explication of certain Points which he had advanc'd before, and shews, 'twere an easy matter to unite all Protestant Sects into one Society. Mr. Bayle gave an extract of this small Work as soon as it appear'd; and Mr. Paets hapning to die about the same time, he added a Character of him in his Republick of Letters. I shall transcribe it from him with so much the more Pleasure, as you have seem'd willing, my Lord, to know this great Man more particularly.

“ This was not the first time, says
“ Mr. Bayle, that the illustrious Mr.
“ Paets, Author of the Letter which
“ we have mention'd, had reason'd
“ solidly on the point of Toleration.
“ There are some other Letters of his
“ extant on this Subject, in the Col-
“ lection of the *Præstantium ac erudi-*
“ *torum virorum Epistole*, printed first
“ in *Octavo*, and afterwards in *Folio*, at
“ *Amsterdam*, in 1684. These are no-
“ ble Monuments of his Eloquence, and
“ of the Solidity of his Judgment. He
“ might easily have given the World
“ many others more considerable, had
“ he

“ he the Ambition of being an Au-
 “ thor; for he was a profound Divine,
 “ a great Civilian, a great Statesman,
 “ and a great Philosopher. He had a
 “ very happy way of conceiving things,
 “ and div’d to the bottom of ’em after
 “ a surprizing manner. Never any
 “ Man reason’d more solidly, or gave
 “ a more majestick turn to whatever
 “ he had to deliver. But he was born
 “ for greater Occupations than that of
 “ an Author. His extraordinary Em-
 “ bassy into *Spain*, which he discharg’d
 “ with so much Advantage to his
 “ Country when under a Consterna-
 “ tion at the great Progresses of *France*,
 “ was an instance of his Capacity in
 “ Affairs of State. What a loss is’t
 “ that this great Man did not live
 “ longer! He had scarce attain’d the
 “ 55th Year of his Age, when he
 “ dy’d on the 8th of *October*, in the
 “ Year 1685. no less valuable on ac-
 “ count of his Intrepidity, his Probity,
 “ his Generosity, his inviolable Faith,
 “ and all the other Qualitys which form
 “ the Man of Honor, than for his great
 “ Sense and profound Erudition. This,
 “ as a Journalist in the Republick of
 “ Letters, adds Mr. Bayle, I’m oblig’d
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“ to say of him. What cou’d I leave
“ unsaid, did I speak from my Senti-
“ ments of Gratitude, penetrated, as
“ I am, by the Favors I have receiv’d
“ from the illustrious Deceas’d?

This Year was a Year of Affliction and Bitterness to Mr. Bayle, and never was his Philosophical Constancy brought to so severe a trial. The Death of Mr. *Paets* touch’d him sensibly, but he was still more agriev’d at the general Oppression of the Reform’d in *France*, and particularly at the cruel and barbarous Treatment of his Brother, who, as I hinted before, was Minister of *Carlat*. The Bishop of *Rieux* had never heard what was become of Mr. Bayle, till his *Critique Generale on the History of Calvinism* had made him known in *France* for one of the best Pens of the Protestant Party. This renew’d the Grief of this Prelate at his Escape from the College of *Foix*, and his return to the Reform’d Religion; and rais’d a Fury in him, which put him on finding some Pretence to be reveng’d of his Brother. The prudent and modest Conduct of this Minister deliver’d him several times from the Snares of the Bishop, which serving only to en-
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rage him the more, he at last resolv'd on his ruin. In the beginning of the Year 1685. by a private understanding with Mr. *Louvois*, who had long waited for an opportunity to be reveng'd on the Author of the *Critique Generale*, he sent a Troop of Archers to his House, who drag'd him out of his Study, and carry'd him to *Chateau Trompette*, where he was thrust into the dismaldest Dungeon in the place: they tormented him a thousand ways to make him change his Religion; which, added to a tender Constitution, did soon put an end to his Life. Here he crown'd that Piety which was remarkable in the whole course of his Life, by a blessed Death, admir'd even by those who had us'd all their Endeavors to make him die a Papist, and over whose utmost Crueltys he triumph'd gloriously.

Mr. *Bayle*, who tenderly lov'd his Brother, receiv'd the News of his Death with exceeding Sorrow. But his Affliction was never greater than when he understood, they had at last repeal'd the *Edict of Nantz*, which *Henry IV.* had granted to the Protestants of his Kingdom, as a Security for the free Exercise of their Religion; and which *Louis XIII.*

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and *Louis* the XIV. had solemnly sworn to maintain. He cou'd not without horror reflect, how the Court of *France*, after having, for above twenty Years past, employ'd all kinds of Artifice to destroy a People, whose only Crime was their having different Notions in Religion from those of the prevailing Sect, cou'd at last make use of Dragoons; Exile, Dungeons, Fire and Sword, and a thousand unheard of Crueltys, to force 'em to embrace a Worship, which they look'd on as superstitious and idolatrous. Nor was he less provok'd to find, that the *French* Authors shou'd have the front to publish, in the Face of Heaven and Earth, that no other Methods but those of Gentleness and Love had been made use of towards the Reform'd, and that the extorted Conversions were all intirely free and voluntary. In short, nothing cou'd possibly shock him more than an infinite number of Writings, the continual Burden of which was the *Immortal Glory* that *Louis the Great* had establish'd, by rooting out *Heresy*, and making *France* intirely *Catholick*.

This Complication of Iniquity put him out of all Patience; and in the excess of his Grief and Indignation he publish'd

1686.

publish'd a small Book, entitl'd, *A Character of France intirely Catholick, under the Reign of Louis the Great*. He might justly have call'd it a *Philippick Oration*: here he paints out in the strongest and liveliest Colors the Behavior and Actions of the Convertists of *France*; he thunders some affrighting Truths in their Ears, and is not sparing of the most expressive Epithets to distinguish 'em. Yet is it far from being a mere Declamation; the whole is sustain'd by a strain of the politest Wit, and the justest Reflections. As Mr. Bayle was thoroughly satisfy'd, that the Clergy of *France* were the principal Authors of all the Miserys of the Reform'd, he suppos'd the Work to be written by a Refugee in *England* to a *French* Ecclesiastick, and entitl'd it, *A Letter from London to Mr. l'Abbé de — a Canon of Notre-Dame of —*. He accompany'd it with two other small pieces, still under borrow'd Characters: the first of which is a Letter from the Canon to a Refugee at *London*, desiring his Thoughts upon the former Letter which had bin sent him. The latter contains the Refugee's Answer to the Canon. This Answer is full of Civility, and Expres-

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sions of Charity. Here the Author speaks in a milder Tone, and contents himself with modestly offering his Advice, and asking a few Questions. Yet is it not wholly without its pointed Passages. Here he promises a Philosophical Commentary, compos'd in *English*, by a learned Presbyterian, on these words of the Parable, *Compel 'em to come in*; which shou'd incontestably prove the necessity of a Toleration, and utterly overthrow all *St. Austin's* Arguments to the contrary.

In effect, *Mr. Bayle* plainly saw, that all the Havock which the Church of *Rome* had made in the World for so many Ages past, proceeded from its Spirit of Conformity and Persecution. He resolv'd therefore to begin at the very source of the Evil; and in this Resolution he set himself heartily, and with all his force, about vanquishing a Monster, which had cover'd the Face of the Earth a thousand times over with Bloodshed and Slaughter; the forest Reproach of Human Nature, and that which renders the precious Name of *Christian* detestable in the sight of Infidels. This, my Lord, was what induc'd him to publish the Work, which he had promis'd in the small Piece I

mention'd. He gave it the following Title, *A Philosophical Commentary on these words of JESUS CHRIST, Compel 'em to come in; in which it is prov'd by several demonstrative Arguments, that nothing is more abominable than making Converts by Compulsion: with a Confutation of all the Sophisms of the Convertists in behalf of Violence, and of St. Austin's Apology for Persecution. Translated from the English of Mr. John Fox of Bruggs, by M. J. F.* Mr. Bayle feign'd it to be a Translation from the *English*, as well because the way of reasoning in it resembl'd that Depth, and strenuous Abstraction, which distinguishes the Writers of *England*, as because he wou'd not be suspected for the Author of this Work; and the better to conceal himself, he disguis'd his Stile, and made use of several, either obsolete or new-coin'd Terms.

This Work is a Master-piece of sound Reasoning; it's divided into three parts, preceded by a Discourse, in which it's fairly declar'd, that 'twas thought requisite to draw the Convertists out of their common place, and to lead 'em a new dance, by proposing Difficultys which they shou'd not even

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have time enough to invent Evasions for. The Stile of this preliminary Discourse does nearly resemble that of *France intirely Catholick*, and may very justly too bear the Title of a *Philippick*. The Definition given in it of a *Convertist*, is almost as cruel as the Thing defin'd; all the rest is much in the same strain: But the Commentary is of a Stile more becoming a Philosopher, and keeps closer to the train of reasoning. The Design of the whole Work is to shew, that Princes and Magistrates ought never to disturb any one on the mere score of Religion. Papists however are exempted, because Non-Toleration is a Doctrine which their Church has always entertain'd, and always practis'd whenever it has had Opportunity. Mr. Bayle makes out his Position with a Force and Evidence, which 'twere hard to match in any other piece of Controversy. What he says concerning the Rights of an erroneous Conscience, will seem somewhat harsh to those who are not accusom'd to reason; but they who are better skil'd in drawing Consequences, will readily agree, there's no Medium between this System and that of Persecution.

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

The first part of the Philosophical Commentary contains nine Proofs of the Falsity of that literal Sense, which Persecutors give to these Words of the Parable, *Compel 'em to come in*; and the second contains a Confutation of eight Objections, which may be made in favor of Constraint, or against that general Toleration which Mr. Bayle wou'd establish. That your Lordship may the better conceive the Design of the third part, I must observe, that to justify the Violences exercis'd on the Reform'd in France, the Archbishop of Paris got a small Book publish'd, entitl'd, *The Conformity of the Conduct of the Church of France for bringing in the Protestants, with that of the Church of Africk for bringing in the Donatists to the Catholick Church*. This Work contain'd two Letters of St. Austin, one written to Vincentius a Donatist Bishop, who had signify'd to this Father, how much he was surpriz'd to find, that having formerly bin of Opinion, that it was not lawful to employ the Authority of the Secular Arm against Hereticks, nor any other Means besides the Word of God and sound Reason, he shou'd now maintain quite the contrary; and

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the other addrest to St. *Austin* by *Boniface*, who had consulted him on the same Subject. Mr. *Bayle* confutes both these Letters, and several Passages in others of the same Tenor, in the third part of his *Philosophical Commentary*, which however appear'd not in some months after the other two.

During all this time Mr. *Bayle* fail'd 1687.
not, over and above the ordinary Functions of his Charge, to continue his *Account of the Republick of Letters* regularly: But he found himself over-burden'd at last by an Undertaking, which, to be rightly discharg'd, requires a Labor and Application above the strength of any one Man. Nor is it to be doubted, that the stretch he had put his Thoughts on in the composing his *Philosophical Commentary*, had in a great measure contributed to exhaust him. He was not able to finish his *Account of the Month of March 1687*. and he advertis'd on the back of the Title Page, *That a Humor fall'n on his Eyes, and an intermitting Fever, had oblig'd him to publish the Account of that Month imperfect. In the mean time his Fever, accompany'd with a violent Head-ach, increas'd upon him to that*
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degree, that he was forc'd to give over that Work; and then he cast his Eyes on Mr. *Beauval*, Brother to Mr. *Basnage*, to continue it. Mr. *Beauval* undertook it, and began with the Month of *September* following; yet he did not think it proper to publish this Continuation, under Mr. Bayle's Title of *The Account of the Republick of Letters*, but took that of *The History of the Works of the Learned*. "I thought, says he in his Preface, that 'twas best to treat the Publick as we do Persons afflicted for the loss of a dear Friend, never bring 'em to the Places which recal the Remembrance, and awaken the Ideas of the Object which causes their Grief. People, continues he, had always in *The Account of the Republick of Letters*, look'd for the illustrious Author, who gave 'em birth: And the same Title meanly sustain'd, had only serv'd to redouble the publick Affliction in the loss of a Man inimitable.

Notwithstanding all Mr. Bayle's Precautions to conceal his being the Author of the *Philosophical Commentary*, there were those it seems who ascrib'd it to him, but not so much to do him an Honor, as to find an occasion of doing him

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a Prejudice with some Divines or some weak People. To put a stop to these Suspicions, he advertis'd in the *Republick of Letters* for April 1687. which was continu'd by other Hands, that some Persons ill affected to the Author of the *Critique Generale* on Mr. Maimbourg, having given themselves the liberty to ascribe the *Philosophical Commentary* to him, he was oblig'd to complain of so ill an Office, and to declare, that he shou'd look on 'em as Persecutors with regard to him, who shou'd continue to vent a Conjecture so opposite to all the Rules of fair Criticism. They may as well, adds he, ascribe all *Voiture's* Letters to *Balzac*, or those of *Baudius* to *Blondel*. Mr. *Jurieu* guiding himself by this sly Maxim, gave roundly into the noose. In a Spirit, such as his, the Principles of the *Commentary* cou'd not but meet with an extreme Abhorrence: The very Names of Gentleness and Toleration were enough, as we have observ'd, to make him stark mad. And how must a Book, wrote with so much Latitude, and an Argument carry'd to such a length, work upon him? As he fancy'd he had made a discovery, that nothing was more uneven than the
Stile,

Stile, he judg'd it cou'd not be wrote by a single Author. He concluded it must be the Work of a *Cabal*, and a *Conspiracy against the Truth*. Thus it was his Imagination, heated with the Vapors from his Choler, magnify'd most Objects. And as he had already began to declare War with all the Refugee Ministers, who did not creep low enough to him, or whose Sentiments were in any wise different from his own, which he call'd the *Truth*; he stuck not to pronounce, that the Authors of the *Philosophical Commentary* were a set of *French Divines*, and consequently Refugees. Accordingly he set himself to confute 'em in a Book, which he call'd, *The Rights of the two Sovereigns in matters of Religion, Conscience, and the Prince; for the Confutation of the Doctrine of Indifference to all Religions, and Universal Toleration, against a Book entitl'd, A Philosophical Commentary on these Words of the Parable, Compel 'em to come in*. It seem'd very surprizing, my Lord, that a Pastor who had cry'd out a thousand times upon the Violences exercis'd on his own Flock, to make 'em changetheir Religion; who knew what infinite Miserys the Spirit of Persecution

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tion had occasion'd in *France*; and who in fine had himself bin oblig'd to live an Exile, that he might enjoy the Liberty of his Conscience: it seem'd, I say, very strange, that such a one shou'd after this, turn Advocate for Non-Toleration and Persecution. I have known those who were puzzl'd, what Construction to put upon a Conduct so very odd. It proceeds, say they, from hence, that the persecuting Spirit is inseparable from the Ecclesiastical, and that he who says Priest, says Persecutor. But is not this turning a case perfectly singular into a general Maxim; and besides, is it not well known, that there have always bin Divines exemplary for their Gentleness and Moderation? They added, that the Doctrine of Ecclesiasticks, in the point of Toleration, was purely relative: that in reality they encounter this Doctrine vigorously, when their own Party is the weakest, and when themselves are in need of a Toleration; but endeavor to make it take place with all their might, as soon as Affairs come to change in their favor, and that they find themselves happily settl'd in the reigning Sect. But this Reason is too general as well as the former, and therefore

fore concludes no better. I dare say, my Lord, you take this matter much righter than these Men; and I'm much mistaken if your Judgment of it ben't thus. Nothing is so difficult as the regulating the Motions of the Heart, as getting rid of a reigning Passion, Pride, for example, Ambition, &c. This, to use the Scripture-Expression, is cutting off a right Hand, plucking out an Eye, and making a Sacrifice to Vertue, which costs infinitely dearer than parting with all the Goods of Fortune. We must not be surpriz'd then, that Mr. *Jurieu*, after having done homage to Religion, at the expence of all the Conveniences he enjoy'd in *France*, has notwithstanding bin unable to sacrifice those Passions of his, which Constitution and Habitude have, as it were, incorporated into the very Substance of his Soul. Accordingly we see a world of vicious Men, who notwithstanding are mighty zealous for their Religion, and who wou'd submit to the last Extremity, rather than part with the outward Profession of it: And this, because it's much easier to be a thorow Orthodox, than to regulate the Passions, and become a really Honest Man. Let's forbear then

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once more wondring, that Mr. *Jurieu* shou'd write in favor of a Doctrine, which he ought to have had in abomination. It's enough, that the Man must gratify the secret Inclination of his Soul.

Mr. *Bayle's* Indisposition hinder'd not his handling his Pen now and then. He publish'd the third Part of the *Philosophical Commentary*, which contains a Refutation of St. *Austin's* two Letters, as I mention'd before; and printed a Letter of five or six Pages before this Volume, directed to his Bookseller, in which he signifies the Reasons which hinder'd his answering in Form to the Treatise of the *Rights of the two Sovereigns*; to wit, " That his Adversary
" had not rightly understood the state
" of the Question. This, says he, is
" evident from the Opinions with which
" he falsly charges me. He breaks his
" Heart to prove, that a Man often
" sins in acting by the light of his Con-
" science, and 'tis fairly granted in more
" places than one of the *Commentary*.
" He charges me, continues he, with
" introducing an Indifference for all Re-
" ligions; whereas there never was a
" Doctrine more opposite to Indiffe-
" rence than that which maintains, we
" ought

“ ought constantly to follow the Dictates of our Conscience.

I had almost forgot, my Lord, to take notice to you of a small Dispute which past between Mr. Bayle and Mr. Arnauld, on the following occasion. This famous Doctor, in his *Theological and Philosophical Reflections on the new System concerning Nature and Grace*, had with all his might attack'd this Principle of Father Malebranche, That all Pleasure is a Good, and renders actually happy in the Enjoyment. Mr. Bayle, in giving an Extract of Mr. Arnauld's Book, declar'd for the Father on this Article: Nothing, says he, is more true, or more innocent, than maintaining, that all Pleasure renders him happy who enjoys, for the time he enjoys it; and that notwithstanding, we ought to refrain those Pleasures which unite us to Bodys. But, say some, it's Vertue only, it's Grate, it's the Love of God, or rather, it's God himself, who is our Beatitude. True, as an Instrument or efficient Cause, to speak with the Philosophers; but as a formal Cause, it's Pleasure, it's the Enjoyment only which is our Felicity. Hereupon Mr. Arnauld took Mr. Bayle to task, in a Treatise which he publish'd some months after,

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after, under the Title of *Advice to the Author of the History of the Republick of Letters*; in which he push'd him from point to point, according to the Rules of his Method of disputing, which was certainly that of a very able Logician. Mr. Bayle reply'd off hand in a small Work, entitl'd, *An Answer from the Author of the History of the Republick of Letters, to the Advice given him concerning what he had said about the Pleasures of Sense, in favor of P. Malebranche, &c.* He maintain'd his first Opinion, and principally endeavor'd to clear the Equivoques and Ambiguities which had overrun this matter, thro the Variety of Tropological Phrases employ'd in it; most Writers having given to the Cause the name of the Effect, and calling Pleasure or Pain, not that which is really so, but that which causes it. He even went so far as to confute those who imagine, that the Pleasures of Sense are not spiritual: he maintains, that if we consider 'em in their Physical Entity, they are purely Spiritual, and that they can't be call'd Corporeal, but in consequence of their Relation to Bodys, which is merely Arbitrary and Accidental; that Relation being founded in this, that God
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has establish'd the Action of certain Objects on the Body of Man, as the occasional Cause of his Pleasures. Mr. Arnauld wou'd not have the last Blow, he answer'd Mr. Bayle anew, in a Work entitl'd, *A Dissertation on the pretended Felicity of the Pleasures of Sense, serving for a Reply to Mr. Bayle's Answer, wherein he wou'd justify what he had advanc'd on this Head, in his Account of the Republick of Letters, for September 1685. in favor of P. Malebranche against Mr. Arnauld.* This Dissertation appearing in the Extremity of Mr. Bayle's Indisposition, he was not able to write an Answer to it; and thinking it too late when he recover'd, he just spoke a word or two of it in another of his Works, and no more.

1688. Mr. Bayle was scarce recover'd of his Illness, when he put out a fourth Part of his *Philosophical Commentary on these Words of JESUS CHRIST, Compel 'em to come in: In which, among other things, he utterly destroys the only shift that his Adversarys had left, by demonstrating that Hereticks have as good a Right to persecute as the Orthodox.* Here he also treats of the Nature and Origin of Errors. In his Preface, he says (but 'tis probabl

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a blind) that certain Reasons, which he there alledges, had induc'd him to reply in form to the Book *concerning the Rights of the two Sovereigns*, and to three Chapters of a former Piece, entitl'd, *A true System of the Church*, in which the Author censures his Doctrine concerning Toleration, and concerning the Rights of an erroneous Conscience. He adds, that he intended to divide this Work into three Parts; the First of which shou'd contain some Supplements, for effectually stopping the Mouths of Persecutors. The Second was to be an Answer to the three Chapters of the *System*, and to all the Objections, which the Author of *The Rights of the two Sovereigns* had propos'd; and the Third shou'd intirely ruin his whole *System*, his Aphorisms, and all he offers directly in behalf of his own Opinion. But presently adds, that tho the Work was finish'd, he had thought fit to suppress the two last Parts, and publish only the first. The chief reason he gives is, that he had consider'd, 'twas easy to answer all the Difficultys started in the *True System of the Church*, from the Solutions he had already given in his *Philosophical Commentary*. And to an-

swer the Book of the *Rights of the two Sovereigns*, 'twas sufficient to shew, that the Author of the *Commentary*, and the Author of the *True System*, were intirely of the same Opinion. This he makes out in five or six Pages, and then adds, that he is not the only Person concern'd in this Dispute; that the Author of the *True System* is as deeply engag'd; and in a word, is no less oblig'd to answer all the Objections propos'd against a Toleration, in the Book of *The Rights of the two Sovereigns*, than the Author of the *Commentary* himself. Mr. Bayle, who well knew that Mr. Jurieu was the Author of both these Works, thought the best way wou'd be to get him into this Lock: he was loth to exasperate him too far, by confuting his Arguments step by step, and according to the strict Rules of reasoning. He thought it better to fight him against himself, by shewing, that he not only advanc'd in one Book what he had destroy'd in another, but even had the misfortune of contradicting himself in one and the same Work. The hurry of his Imagination depriv'd him of Memory and Judgment; and you shall see, my Lord,

Lord, more Instances of his declaiming frequently against Opinions which he himself had advanc'd. I shan't now stand to give the Contents of this fourth Part of the *Philosophical Commentary*. You have seen by the Title, that it contains several new Remarks, explaining and confirming what he had offer'd in the former Parts.

Besides, my Lord, tho Mr. Bayle always mention'd this Work to your Lordship as his own, yet he never publicly own'd it. He always persisted in that kind of Disclaim which he made upon its first Appearance: not that he cou'd run any risk in avowing it, but that he had no mind to bring himself under an Obligation of examining all the paltry Objections which might be started in a matter so very delicate, and so capable of receiving an invidious turn from malicious Wits. His Arguments carry'd so much Conviction and Evidence with 'em, that he did not believe they cou'd ever be solidly confuted. Therefore he did not give himself the least trouble to defend 'em, when Mr. Saurin, Minister of *Utrecht*, publish'd a Work, in the year 1697. in which he endeavor'd equally to confute the *Philo-*

sophical Commentary, and the Treatise of *The Rights of the two Sovereigns*. It's pity Mr. Bayle's Design of concealing himself did not permit his giving this Book that regularity of Turn, and all those Beautys which distinguish his other Pieces. I often press'd him to give a correcter Edition of it, but he always excus'd himself upon the infinite trouble of casting it over anew. The Value your Lordship has for this Work mov'd you also to desire he wou'd revise it; and I don't doubt it had bin a pleasure to him to give you such a Mark of his Deference, if some unforeseen Affairs had not diverted his Thoughts. Yet tho he disown'd this *Philosophical Commentary* in such a way as I observ'd, 'tis certain he never absolutely deny'd he was the Author of it; however not avowing it openly, it cou'd not be cited against him without transgressing the Rules of Equity. They who pretend to find Passages in it which contradict other parts of his Works, wou'd they but examine it closer, might easily perceive their Error. But perhaps they see it plain enough, and study only how to render their Adversary odious.

A great many Gentlemen, who exprest their Concern for Mr. Bayle's Indisposition, were overjoy'd at his Recovery. Most of the Learned sent him their Compliments; and Mr. du Tot Ferrare, a Counsellor in the Parliament of Normandy, a Person of great Merit, and a Master in the Lapidary Stile, inscrib'd the following Lines to him.

In Doctissimi BÆLII Sani-
tatem restitutam
S O T E R I A.

(prohibet :
Q^UÆ te mori vetat Gloria, agrotare
Omnibus carus ac utilis,
Scriptores
Criticâ face elucidasti, Censoriâ notâ emen-
Quæstor urnam movens, (dasti,
Magnum in nomen ituros
Æternitati
Pronubâ manu dicasti :
Laboribus tuis alios absumis,
Deliciis nostris nusquam absumendus.
In hoc venerandus,
Quod neminem contempsisti :

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

*In hoc verendus,
Quod neminem formidasti :
Dignus qui veritatis annos exaques,
Qui labantem sustentas cognatam Veritati
Libertatem.*

*Non ad unius utilitatem Regionis natus,
Ita exilium toleras,
Ut videaris optasse ;*

*Ita cunctos eminus cominus reficis,
Ut vix credaris ullibi abesse.*

*Theatrum Eruditionis circumductile
Factus es Orbi:*

*Subsellia quæ dicendo fatigare non potes,
Te silentem ferre, Te quiescente quiescere
Ne spera. (posse,*

Vale, vive, scribe.

*Encænia renovatæ Facundiæ
Faustis Litteratorum Acclamationibus
Celebrantur.*

1689. The smallest Productions of celebrated Men being reckon'd valuable, and your Lordship having besides commanded me to omit nothing that has appear'd of Mr. Bayle's, I shall here observe, that he's the Author of the Preface to *Furetiere's Dictionary*. This Abbot dying before his Work was quite printed off, and having left no Preface to it, the Bookseller pray'd Mr. Bayle

to write him one. It's a curious Piece, and was known at first sight to come from some masterly Hand.

When your Lordship commanded me to send you a true Picture of Mr. *Jurieu*, you did not, I suppose, mean, that I shou'd trouble you with an account of all his Actions: I shall therefore only observe, that setting up for an Inquisitor, he attack'd I don't know how many of the Reform'd Divines, most of 'em Refugees in *Holland*, and impeach'd 'em in several Synods as Hereticks, or Favorers of Hereticks. Those who liv'd in other Countrys he defam'd by Libels, or by private Letters containing Accounts of 'em. For he publish'd every thing that his Spys either whisper'd or wrote to him, and alledg'd in Proof what was trusted to him in Confidence, or in the most private Conversation, by those who liv'd with him on a foot of Friendship. In short, his Fury transported him to that degree, as to fall foul on the Relations or Friends of those whom he hated, tho they never had given him the least Offence, nor ever set up for Men of Letters. Where he wanted a Pretence of charging 'em with Heresy, he endeavor'd

deavor'd to bring 'em under Suspicion with the Governments which they serv'd; and wrote to the Ministers of State, that they were Traitors or Spys of *France*. I shan't stand, my Lord, to trouble you with particular Instances of these Practices. This wou'd furnish out a large Volume: I shall only relate some Facts of a more general Nature, and which have a more immediate dependence on the third of this Relation.

In 1684. Mr. *Jurieu* publish'd a Satyr, entitl'd, *The Spirit of Mr. Arnould*; in which, to revenge his private Piques, he attack'd the Reputation of several great Men of the Court of *France*, and thereby expos'd the Reform'd Churches to an eminent Danger, by discovering, that he had Complices all over the Kingdom, who furnish'd him with Memoirs, and pick'd up the very Ballads to supply him. He seem'd to be in no pain, lest the resenting of such Insults shou'd hasten the projected Ruin of the Protestants; his only study was to gratify his Revenge. The Court of *England* was as little spar'd in this Satyr as that of *France*. There were violent Invectives in it against some Persons of

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Note there, and particularly against the Clergy of the Church of *England*; so that the Libel no sooner appear'd in *London*, but the Copys were immediately seiz'd, and the Bookseller imprison'd. There was such a noise made there about this Book, that Mr. *Jurieu* dreading it might come before the States of *Holland*, wrote Letters to some Persons in *London*, in which he solemnly protested, he was not the Author.

Two Years after he set up for a Prophet, and printed a Treatise concerning the *Accomplishment of the Prophecys, or the approaching Deliverance of the Church*, which promis'd the Restoration of the Refugees in 1687. and the Downfal of Spiritual *Babylon* soon after: *The Hour is at hand*, says he, *when the Nations of the Earth shall drink of the Blood of the Beast, and consume her Carcase in the Fire; when they shall strip the great Whore of all her Garments, and lay Babylon in Ashes.* The whole Kingdom of *France* was to embrace the Reformation, and become the principal Instrument of these marvellous Things: He foretold, *That Providence had destin'd her to an exceeding Elevation, that she shou'd arrive at the highest pitch of Glory, and build her Great-*
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ness on the Ruins of the Papal Empire; and last of all, that a thorow and total Reformation shou'd be brought about in France without the Effusion of Blood. This Book, ridiculous as it was, found Credit with many of the Refugees, seduc'd by the Reputation and decisive Airs of Mr. *Jurieu*; nay, some of 'em built so much upon it, that they stole back into France, there sedately to wait the Accomplishment of the Prophecy. They carry'd a spice of his Apocalyptical Spirit along with 'em, and infus'd it into others of their Brethren. In fine, these poor People fill'd their Heads so with these Chimeras and fanatic Visions, that in 1688. a great multitude of all Ages and Sexes got together in *Dauphiné*, and afterwards in the *Vivarez*, fancying themselves verily inspir'd, and falling into Trances and extraordinary Agitations. Mr. *Jurieu* publish'd his *Pastoral Letters* about this time, which were commonly call'd, the *Spiritual Gazet*; in which he spoke of these new Prophets, as of Persons sent from Heaven, and rank'd 'em with the Prophets of the Old Testament. He treated all as Libertines, and little better than Atheists, who wou'd not allow the Prophets of

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Dauphiné, the singing of Psalms there by Angels, and the Shepherdess of *Cret*, to be so many Realities, and that the Hand of God was in it; he arraign'd 'em publickly, and 'twas upon this occasion, that Mr. *Beauval* had the misfortune of losing his Friendship, and finding himself soon after expos'd in one of his printed Libels. Some have suspected, that the *Accomplishment of the Prophecys*, was only a Wile to prepare the Reform'd of *France* for a Rebellion; but I believe they wrong Mr. *Jurieu*, who charge him with such an Imposture: he verily, and in good earnest imagin'd, he had bin let into the profoundest Mysterys of the Revelations. There was no cheat in this; not but he had try'd his Skill in Politicks to bring about a Revolution in *France*. He had advanc'd in his *Esprit de Mr. Arnauld*, that the People are above their Kings, and publish'd some Pamphlets tending to make the Dauphin dethrone his Father: but finding this had no effect, and passionately desiring to have his Prophecys accomplish'd, he chang'd his Battery, and of a sudden began to be sweet upon *Lewis XIV.* When he saw his fatal Year 1689. come smoothly on,

on, and no signs of a Restoration, he cast his longing Looks towards this Prince, and wou'd fain try what was to be done by wheedling. In the Book I just mention'd, he had affirm'd that the King of *France*, out of a Fondness for false Glory, was the direct Cause of all the Miserys of the Reform'd; and acquitted *P. de la Chaise* himself, and the Archbishop of *Paris*: but in his Pastoral Letters he chang'd Stile a little, and left pressing the Remnant of the Reform'd to quit the Kingdom; his Language to the King of *France* was that of *Great Prince*, who delighted not in Blood, and whose natural Spirit was that of Clemency. Nor did he refuse Mr. *Louvois* some few Grains of Incense. Then he exhorted the Reform'd of *France* to read his *Accomplishment of the Prophecys*, without ceasing, and never hope for a Re-establishment by the hand of Man or of any earthly Power, but from their own Stedfastness, and from the King's Goodness and Compassion. His Letters to the Duke of *Montauzier* in favor of his little Prophets of *Dauphiné*, were fill'd with his Majesty's Praises, whom he rank'd among the *Gods of the Earth*; and with Protestations

tions of Zeal and dutiful Affection for his Person. He fancy'd *Lewis XIV.* mov'd by so much Zeal for his Glory, and ravish'd to find himself stil'd *God of the Earth*, wou'd order the Duke to write him some kind things in answer. But instead of Thanks he soon found his Correspondent only laught at him, and despis'd him so far as to expose his Letters, and make him the Jest of Mankind. Upon this Mr. *Jurieu* began to change Stile a second time. The War having open'd him a new Door of Hope, he laid aside his Spirit of Humiliation, and preach'd up another sort of Gospel. The Revolution in *England*, and the Confederacy of so many Powers against *France*, chang'd the whole Plan of his Prophetick System; henceforward 'twas agreed, that the Reform'd Religion shou'd triumph in that Kingdom by the way of Conquest. Mr. *Jurieu* return'd to his Political Maxims, and exhorted the Protestants of *France* to take up Arms for the defence of their Religion. He even invented a new kind of Ponton for landing an Army on the Coasts of *France*, in spite of the Militia. He flatter'd himself already with the Thoughts of preaching in the *Notre-dame*

dame of Paris. At the same time he rail'd bitterly against the King of *France*, and against others in the highest Stations, not only in his Pamphlets, but from the Pulpit also. And I ought not to forget that some Refugees in *Holland*, infected by his Spirit, and abusing the Liberty of the Press there, translated several Satyrical Pieces out of *English*, and wrote others themselves, against the King of *France*, King *James*, and some of the principal Persons of both Courts.

All the sober part of the Refugees, not insensible of the Prejudice this might do 'em, equally disapprov'd the Conduct of these Scriblers, and that of their grand Model Mr. *Jurieu*. But this Minister had rendred himself so formidable by his manner of treating People, that they durst not complain of it openly, how just soever their Grief might be. Mr. *Bayle*, ever a Friend to Moderation and Equity, suffer'd more this way than any body else, because he was oblig'd to be often at Mr. *Jurieu*'s House, where the Company was much chang'd from what it had been at *Sedan*; all the Conversation at present turning either on Prophecy, or Satyr,

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tyr, which spar'd neither Friend nor Foe. Nothing cou'd be more opposite to Mr. Bayle's Nature, yet he drag'd his Chain for a long time without having the power to break it.

Matters were at this pass, when in 1690. the Month of April 1690. there appear'd a Book intituled, *Important Advice to the Refugees concerning their approaching return into France, being a New-Year's Gift to one of 'em in 1690. by Monsieur C. L. A. A. P. D. P.* This Work bore date from Paris, and was wrote with so much Heat and Vehemence, that the Author himself call'd it a Sermon. In the first place he rallys the Refugees, that 1689. the Year of Accomplishment, was expir'd, and yet none of those miraculous Revolutions come to pass which they had promis'd themselves. He congratulated 'em on the King's favorable Dispositions, as they gave out, for their re-establishment; and added, that all the sober Party in the three Estates of the Kingdom, wou'd be overjoy'd to see 'em. But he advis'd 'em at the same time, *to make a kind of Quarantain before they set foot in France, to purge away the bad Air they had breath'd in the Places of their Banishment, and which*
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had infected 'em with two very dangerous and very loathsom Distempers; one of which was the Spirit of Satyr, the other the Republican Spirit, tending to introduce a State of Anarchy, the bane of human Society. These were the two main Heads of this Discourse. Then the Author declaims vehemently against the *Satyric Pieces* I have hinted at, and spitefully alledges that they are chargeable on the whole Body of the Refugees, in regard they had not publicly disavow'd 'em. *Has any of you*, says he, *with or without a Commission from your Body, publish'd a Syllable to shew, that these Libels are the Work of some Persons of no Consequence, whose Temerity and Passion give Offence to the Bulk of the Refugees? Nothing's omitted here*, added he, *to give weight to these Remarks, and to many more of the same kind, with a design of fixing an Imputation on the whole Body, which properly and originally concerns the Scriblers alone.* Then he comes to speak of their *Seditious Pamphlets*; of this kind he reckons all such as maintain that the Prince and People are reciprocally oblig'd, by Original Contract, to the observation of certain Dutys, in such a manner, that if the Prince happens

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to violate his part, the Subjects are absolv'd from theirs, and may transfer their Allegiance to a new Sovereign, whether the Body of the People unanimously declare the Throne vacant, or only the major and more considerable part of 'em. And here the Author attacks this Maxim with all his Might; he carries the Point of Absolute Power very high, and endeavors to shew the many Inconveniences which must follow from the opposite Notion; imploying that sort of Argument which in the Schools is call'd *Deductio ad Absurdum*. He rakes up all the Objections the Papists have ever made against the Protestants on this Subject, and on their taking up Arms in the Cause of Religion; and spares neither the Reform'd of France, nor the *Vandois* who had newly re-entred their Country by Force of Arms; nor the Presbyterians of *England* whom he charges with beheading *Charles I.* nor last of all the Clergy of the Church of *England*, who after declaring so highly in favor of the Prerogative, had notwithstanding made the Prince of *Orange* King in prejudice of their lawful Sovereign, or, which in his Opinion came to the same thing,

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were willing to admit him, provided he'd be content with the Title of *Regent*. The Author concludes with several Remarks upon the last Campaign (in 1689.) tending to exalt the Glory of *France*, as well as that of the King.

There was a Preface to this Work, the pretended Author of which (suppos'd to live in *London*) was as zealous a Protestant, as that of the Book appear'd to be a violent Papist. He took notice that one of his Friends had sent him this Piece, and sets forth the Reasons which had determin'd him to publish, and the manner in which he design'd to confute it. *I'm inform'd*, says he, *and that from the Mouth of Persons lately come from France, and by Letters from several parts of the Kingdom, that our Enemys make a handle of some Pamphlets publish'd in Holland, to stir up the People against our Brethren there, and to represent the Refugees as Monsters of Calumny, Reproach, and Aversion to France: That the Monks make Extracts of some of our Writings, and read 'em to the People from their Pulpits: That they descant upon 'em with their Monkish Oratory, to produce in the People, as much as in them lies, an implacable*

placable Indignation against us, which even reaches to the King's Cabinet, and makes him resolve on hazarding his Crown and Kingdom, rather than restore the Protestants. I consider'd then, adds he, that 'twas fit I shou'd let our Brethren know, by publishing what was communicated to me, upon what a foot they stand, and what envenom'd Scandals they lie under; hoping that one or other of 'em might be provok'd to lead the way by a word or two in their vindication, as to these two general Points only, our Satyrical Writings, as they call 'em in France, and our Seditious, whilst I at my leisure take this Advice to pieces, and draw up a full and particular Reply to it.

This Advice to the Refugees was printed privately at Amsterdam, and made some noise upon its first coming out; but was afterwards in a manner forgot, when in the beginning of the Year 1691. Mr. Jurieu of a sudden took it in his Head to let Mr. Basnage know he look'd upon Mr. Bayle as the Author of it, and that he wou'd soon make the Seven United Provinces too hot for him. Mr. Bayle desir'd his Friend to acquaint Mr. Jurieu, he wou'd willingly set this Matter right with him, and satisfy him

in all his Doubts ; but he never wou'd give him a hearing. The secret hatred he had bore Mr. *Bayle* of a long time, was now turn'd into Fury ; and he thought this *Advice to the Refugees* gave him the fairest handle in the World to be reveng'd. So he set himself to write an Answer to the *Advice*, in which first and foremost he query'd upon the Author, and characteris'd him in such a manner, that any body cou'd see he meant Mr. *Bayle*, tho he durst not name him. Then he enter'd into a discussion of the Book it self, but did little more than enlarge and copy from the Plan of a Reply which was sketch'd out in the Preface ; vaunting however, and strutting as he went on, no less than if it were a way expressly open'd and vouchsafed to himself alone. In the mean time he was terribly perplex'd to think, what end Mr. *Bayle* cou'd propose in writing this Book.

Upon a Supposition, that he was really the Author (which however was founded, as he himself owns, only upon Presumptions) it was no hard matter to see into his Design. The truth is, he was sensibly concern'd to find a world of Refugees feed themselves

selves with Chimeras and Apocalyptick Visions, which turn'd the whole Body into Ridicule, and was by so much the more to be dreaded, as the same kind of Folly had formerly been very fatal to the Protestants who fled out of the Emperor's Dominions: Nothing having done these a greater disservice than the Conduct of their *Drabitius* and *Comenius* (whom Mr. *Jurieu* rank'd with the antient Prophets) and a Book wrote in a violent Spirit by the latter, had like to have occasion'd a general Massacre of the Protestants of *Poland*, during the Invasion of *Charles Gustavus* King of *Sweden*. One might add, that Mr. *Bayle* having bin bred up in some modern Notions of the Protestants of *France* concerning the Sovereign Power of Princes, it's no wonder if he strain'd this Point so high; considering especially that in *France* the King pretends to be Absolute, nor is it safe to whisper the contrary there: so that Republican Pamphlets from Refugees, far from having any good Effect, cou'd only serve to render 'em still more odious, and throw in an unsurmountable Obstacle to their Re-admission. He remember'd too from a sad experience, how cruelly they

were reveng'd of his Brother for the *Critique Generale* on P. Maimbourg's History of Calvinism; and there was much more reason to fear that they wou'd make the few poor Protestants who staid behind in *France*, pay dearly for the Satyr's which some of their Brethren publish'd against the Court in foreign Countrys. Last of all, finding that the Papists, and particularly the Missionarys, made a malicious use of 'em for blackning the Refugees, and never left crying up the Grandeur of *France*, he had rak'd up all the old and new Objections of the most angry and most virulent Papists; the Glosses of their Flatterers on the Operations of the Campaign in 1689. the Scandals rais'd upon the whole Body of Refugees for the Faults of a few Scriblers, &c. in order to open a Field for a full and useful Remonstrance, and for a Reply, which might at once confound the Malice of their Persecutors, the Vanity of the Flatterers; and rescue the Refugees from the *Ridiculous*, on the Article of their Prophets. All these Considerations might be corroborated by other Passages of his Book and Preface, of the same tenor with those I have

have already produc'd. Upon the whole, it may be offer'd in Mr. Bayle's Defence, that after having painted out the Crueltys and Barbaritys of the Papists in the strongest Colors, he might be privileg'd to censure some few steps in the Conduct of the Protestants, which to him appear'd not according to Order. And when the worst is said, he might perhaps be tax'd of Indiscretion, but no such odious Consequences justly suggested.

This, my Lord, is the turn that any one of a genteel Spirit had given the *Advice to the Refugees*, cou'd he imagine it Mr. Bayle's. But Mr. Jurieu was incapable of so equitable a Construction, or of acting the fair part. He did not make it his business to extenuate, but rather aggravate Faults, the better to push his own Ends: He industriously toss'd his Head above all these Considerations. Not that I wou'd be understood, my Lord, as tho he thorowly perceiv'd Mr. Bayle's drift in it (still supposing him the Author) but he hellishly dissembled the sense of his Soul; for tho on other Occasions he had given ground to think him capable of such an Imposture, yet I wou'd

willingly endeavour to clear him in this. The transport of his Passion undoubtedly hinder'd his reflecting: it represented all Objects such as he desir'd to find 'em; and as his main Design was only to blacken Mr. Bayle, he encounter'd Crimes of his in every Page, which yet were hatch'd in his own Brain. Blinded moreover by Self-love, he was far from perceiving that the heavy Imputations on the Refugees in general, were almost solely pointed at himself; and that the main of the *Advice* concern'd his own Prophetick Chimera's; his Satyrs against the Court of *France*; his Libels for stirring up the People to Rebellion, and the *Dauphin* to dethrone his Father; his variations in the Point of Sovereign Power, and all the other Effects of his waspish violent Spirit. The *Satyrical Writings* and the *Seditious* were, as your Lordship has seen, the two principal Heads of the *Sermon*, and precisely the two Points which the Author desir'd might be publickly disavow'd. Mr. *Jurieu's* Libels were even cited to both, yet all cou'd not open his Eyes: He had indeed a suspicion that he was struck at in particular, but he pass'd slightly by this

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Consideration, which tended to extenuate, or even to cancel Mr. Bayle's pretended Crimes, and destroy the Scheme of that Charge which he was forging to render him odious.

Upon the whole, he pretended, that Mr. Bayle, not able to bear the King of France run down, and being besides scandaliz'd at the Revolution in England, and the dethroning King James, had cunningly wrote this *Advice to the Refugees*, as an Apology for both these Princes; and the better to conceal his real Sentiments, had assum'd the Character of a Papist and profest Enemy to the Reform'd. He back'd this Notion with Slanders in abundance, and publish'd his Answer under the following Title: *Considerations on a Libel against Religion, against the State, and against the Revolution of England, intill'd, Important Advice to the Refugees, on their approaching Return into France.* In the mean time he did not believe, that any Motive of Interest had induc'd Mr. Bayle to write with so much warmth in favor of the Royal Power and Prerogative. *We must do him this Justice*, says he, *that Interest can have no part in these Flights of Loyalty; for he cou'd have no Design of ingrati-*

gratiating by this Work with the Powers whom it concern'd, because he had taken all kind of Precautions to conceal himself. Nor did he believe him quite so great an Enemy to Protestants as he seem'd in his Book. It must be own'd too, says he, that he is not that bitter Enemy to the Protestant Religion he wou'd appear to be. Thus the mere force of Truth constrain'd him to acquit Mr. Bayle on the score of Religion and Integrity, at the same time that he was using his utmost Endeavors to embroil him with the Government. He fell into much the same kind of Contradiction with regard to the Advice. Whenever he had Mr. Bayle in his Eye, he pronounc'd it a Masterpiece, and represented it as the most pernicious Book that ever was wrote against the Reform'd. But this high Opinion vanish'd as soon as the Author was out of his Mind. His first Judgment upon it was regulated by his Thoughts of Mr. Bayle, their reigning Object. The Stile, he pretended, was easy, flowing, lively; the Images natural, the Metaphors happy, the Ornaments well chosen, and rightly plac'd: it carry'd a secret Charm, was full of fine Literature, and the Erudition skilfully dispens'd thro
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the whole. All this pointed to Mr. Bayle's Character. Then, he said, *this Book comprehended in a small Compass, all that ever had bin offer'd with a Design of effectually blasting the Protestants, and exposing the Reformation by the most hideous View.* For this was likewise conducive to his end: But when he sat down to confute it, and frying over the Argument had forgot his first Draught, 'twas all of a sudden *an extravagant Piece, without Principle, without Method, without Reasoning; there were but two miserable Difficultys to be clear'd in it; the rest was only Flourish, Invective, Impertinence; 'twas a pretty Posy of Polyanthea, an errand piece of Pedantry.* This Unevenness and Inconsistency in the same Book, is a plain Argument, that Mr. *Jurieu's* Judgment proceeded intirely from Passion, and that he'd rather allow the *Advice* took in every thing that *was truly grating on the Reform'd,* than by undervaluing it too much, leave the least doubt of Mr. Bayle's being the Author. Yet conscious of the Weakness of his Presumptions, he still, with all his Artifices, kept within some Bounds of Moderation. But he did not long continue in this uneasy state: an occasion

sion was soon presented for giving full vent to all his Rage. Give me leave, my Lord, to mention this Occasion.

A certain *Geneva* Merchant, call'd *Goudet*, wou'd needs undertake to reconcile the Interests of all the Princes who were then at War; and wrote some Discourses by way of Dialogue to this purpose, containing the Project of a Peace. His Proposal was thus: The *Dutch* were to have the whole *East India* Trade made over to them, Treatys of Commerce settl'd with all their Neighbors, such as they themselves cou'd desire; and *France*, in favor of them, was to rase some of its most advanc'd Frontier Places. King *William* was to be own'd as rightful King of *England*, and King *James* sent to the Conquest of *Jerusalem*. The King of *France* was to keep the Principality of *Orange*, and give an Equivalent in the County of *Gez* and the Territorys adjacent, or else annex a part of the Dependencys of *Cleves* and *Juliers* to the County of *Meurs*, which the Emperor was to erect into a Dutchy, with the Title of *Nassau*, in honor of that House. He settl'd the Interest of all the other Potentates in Arms much after the same manner,

manner, and then propos'd, that the Christian Princes shou'd enter into a Confederacy for the Destruction of the *Turkish* Empire. The Duke of *Bavaria* was to be Emperor of *Constantinople*; King *James*, as I said before, was to be King of *Jerusalem* and *Syria*; *Servia* and *Bulgaria* were to fall to the Children of the Duke of *Lorain*, and *Belgrade* was to be the Capital of their new Dominions; they were to have all the *Low Countrys* besides, except *Mons*, which was to remain in the King of *France's* Hands; this Prince was likewise to keep the *Franche Comté*, *Lorain*, *Luxembourg*, and the new Conquests in *Flanders*: *Hunningen* was to be demolish'd, and *Mont-Royal* and *Fort-Louis* ras'd. As to the Protestants of *France*, they were to be restor'd to the same Liberty of Conscience in that Kingdom as the Catholics enjoy'd in *Holland*. The *Sieur Goudet* was so fond of this Project, that after having communicated it to his Acquaintance in *Geneva*, he wou'd needs know the Opinion of People in *Holland* upon it. Accordingly he desir'd Mr. *Minutoli*, a Minister and Professor of the *Belles Lettres* at *Geneva*, to send the first six Dialogues
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to his old Acquaintance Mr. Bayle, to be communicated by him to several illustrious Persons in foreign Countrys. Mr. Minutoli at his request sent him the first Sheets in September 1690. without letting Mr. Bayle know the Author, and among others nam'd my Lord Bishop of Salisbury; the Baron de Groeben, Governor to Prince Louis, the Elector of Brandenburg's Brother; Mr. Van Beuning; Mr. Hulft, Resident of the States General at Brussels; Mr. Fremond d'Abblancourt, and Mr. de Bauval, as proper Persons to be consulted upon this rare Project. Mr. Bayle, who was always an obliging Friend, answer'd Mr. Minutoli, that he wou'd with Pleasure acquit himself of his Commission, but declar'd his own Opinion, *That the Author of this Piece might assure himself, no Proposal of a general Peace wou'd be hearken'd to, which did not deprive the King of France of all his Acquisitions, and put it out of his Power to give his Neighbors any further Jealousy.* He afterwards communicated the Project to these Gentlemen: some sent it back unread, and others wrote him word, that it was not only meanly wrote, but besides stuff with mere Visions, and Ideas of a Platonick Com-

Commonwealth; or a Christian Commonwealth, much after the Plan which the Duke of *Sully* has left us. For Mr. *Bayle*'s part he never had read it, having besides an extreme Aversion to the reading of any Manuscript Pieces, full Employment of his own; and the little or no regard which others had shewn for it, intirely diverted him. However he wrote Mr. *Minutoli* an Account of the Reception it had met with.

As ill luck wou'd have it, Mr. *Jurieu* was not nam'd among the Persons to be consulted, and Mr. *Bayle* durst not shew it him for fear he shou'd take the presenting him a Project so very short of his own as a kind of Insult. For Mr. *Bayle* had understood by Mr. *Minutoli*'s first Letter, that this did not make the Reform'd the uppermost Religion in *France*, as Mr. *Jurieu* peremptorily insisted. Notwithstanding these Discouragements, the *Sieur Goudet* had his Project printed at *Lausanne*, and the Booksellers of *Holland* soon got Copys of it. By this means it came to Mr. *Jurieu*'s Hands; and finding about the same time, that Mr. *Bayle* had receiv'd a Manuscript Copy of it some months before, he publish'd a long Discourse at the
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head of his *Considerations on the Advice to the Refugees*, intitled, *Important Advice to the Publick*, in which he pretended there was a *French Cabal*, extended from the North to the South of *Europe*, whose design was to embroil *Holland* and *England*, to confound all the Counsels of the Allies, and thereby procure *France* the Universal Monarchy, to the extirpation of the Protestant Religion.

This rare discovery fully open'd his Eyes to see the drift of the *Advice to the Refugees*: He then frankly declar'd, that what he had said in the *Considerations* touching the Author's Design, was only the effort of a Mind groping in a darksome Scene. It's true, adds he, there was something of dimness in the case too; and one can hardly comprehend, now it's all come out, how we shou'd miss divining the whole Mystery at the very first thought. They who are under any suspicion, continues he, cou'd not be more plausibly justify'd by their Friends, than by asking *cui bono*? And I own, says he, this cross Question, tho it did not, it's true, prevent my guessing at the Author of the Book, put me however to a nonplus; when Providence at last, which won't suffer such Mysterys of Iniquity

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Iniquity to lie long undiscover'd, had by another unforeseen Circumstance enabled us to sound the bottom of it. Be it known then, crys he, that this Advice is not the Work of a single Person, mov'd from Principle to defend the Authority of Kings, but the Fruits of a Cabal extending from North to South, whose Center lies in Paris and in the Court of France.

Then he informs the World that there's a *French Party* at *Geneva* compos'd of Persons of all Ranks and Characters, and that this Cabal of the South communicates with such another in *Holland* and the North. The Design of these Gentlemen is to promote the Interest of *France* as much as possible; and not being in a condition to procure her Auxiliary Troops or Alliances, the Court of *France* makes use of their Pens to work upon the Spirits of her Enemys, and incline their hearts to grant her a Peace, and leave her in possession of all that she has rob'd her Neighbors of, and annex'd to her antient Domains. The general means to this end was by dividing the Allies, and breaking that Confederacy which in all probability must be fatal to *France* at

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long run. And the means of bringing this Disunion about was, first, by alienating the Minds of the Catholick Confederates, by insinuating that the War they were engag'd in cou'd only tend to the Ruin of the Church of *Rome*; and by representing Protestants in general as declar'd Enemies of Sovereign Power, and consequently unqualify'd for their Alliance. Now such was the drift of the *important Advice to the Refugees*, which Mr. *Jurieu* was not able to penetrate at first sight. Mr. *Bayle*, Head of the Northern Cabal, had wrote it with a design of breaking the Grand Alliance, and working upon the Catholick Powers to leave the Protestants in the lurch. The next Artifice for dividing the Confederates, was by persuading 'em all in general, that 'twas a folly to keep on the War at so prodigious an expence and so horrible an effusion of Blood, when the most they cou'd expect from it at last was Peace (the Power of *France* being so much superior to that of all *Europe*; besides that they never wou'd be able to reduce it, or wrest out of its hands what it was once possess'd of) and at the same time to suggest to the Protestant Powers in particular, that is, the

the *English* and *Dutch*, that they spent themselves to no purpose in this War, since they might find their Account apart, and get out of the Broil by as advantageous a Peace now as ever they shou'd, after a long and even successful War; which tended directly to make their People murmur. Now this, according to Mr. *Jurieu*, was one View of the Author of the *Advice to the Refugees*, especially in his Conclusion. But as this was too important a Point to be handled in so small a Work, that Party of the Cabal which manag'd in the South, had prepar'd another o' purpose to urge this common Reason, or second Means of dividing the Allies; and this was the *Dialogues upon a Project of Peace*, which I have mention'd already. Mr. *Jurieu* added, upon the credit of a Letter which was wrote to him, that the Author of the *Project* boasted how his Work had been revis'd at *Geneva* by the Resident of *France*, and by one of the chief Syndics; that it was afterwards communicated to the King, who made some Alterations in it with his own Hand: and he pretended, that after this it was sent to Mr. *Bayle*, Agent for the Cabal in *Holland*,

land, in order to be printed there under his Inspection.

Here, my Lord, are all those great Lights which the Project of a Peace by the *Sieur Goudet*, had afforded Mr. *Jurieu*; and here's the ground of his endeavoring to ruin Mr. *Bayle's* Reputation, whom he now branded as Impious, Profane, a Man of no Honor nor Religion, an Impostor, a Traitor and Enemy to the State; in a word, one that deserv'd to be detested, and punish'd corporally. In the mean time all these Accusations were founded, as he himself own'd, not on any convincing Proof, but bare *Presumptions* which his Hatred and Fury had suggested, and which on this account he had reason enough to call *Violent*. 'Twou'd have crown'd all his Joys o' this side Heaven, had the Magistrates but seconded his Fury, or cou'd he himself have had the conducting Mr. *Bayle* to a Scaffold. *If it was not in my Power*, says he, *to do him all the Mischief he deserv'd, at least I have made him a Mark of publick Hatred*. Wou'd any one believe, my Lord, if he did not see it in his own words, that the Heart of Man cou'd be capable of so black, so brutal a Malice as this?

That

That a grave Divine, who had given a Person of Merit, for several Years together, his Friendship and Esteem, and had always met with futable Returns, shou'd industriously break with him, o' purpose to make himself the Instrument of his Ruin, and of delivering him over to the Civil Power? This is a Baseness so infamous, that Language has not Terms to express it. The most unciviliz'd Pagans had abhor'd such ways. I shan't dwell any longer upon an Object so hideous; and I ask your Lordship's Pardon for saying so much of him already. I shall only say, that Mr. *Jurieu* imagining the Affair of the Project of Peace furnish'd Dirt enough to blacken Mr. *Bayle*, he began to carry it somewhat milder to the *Advice to the Refugees*. Far from making it look'd on as a formidable Piece, and pernicious to the Protestant Interest, he represented it as a thing which cou'd do 'em no great harm, and might happen to do 'em service. *The Author believ'd, says he, it wou'd do 'em no more harm at long run, than a hundred other Libels which have been written against 'em: That this wou'd be forgot like the rest; and that in the mean time it*

did France some service, and the Protestants too by chance; because it might contribute to the breaking the Confederacy, and consequently the restoring 'em all a Peace. This Reflection was founded upon the Author of the *Project's* proposing Terms of Peace, not disadvantageous to the Protestant Princes. But Mr. *Jurieu* was averse to their accepting any, till they had made the Protestant Religion the uppermost in France, and accomplish'd the rest of his Prophecys. This was the secret Motive which warp'd him against a Peace. In fine, he was so pleas'd at his discovery of this Project of Peace, that he afterwards spoke of the *Advice to the Refugees* as a Trifle; and cou'd not forbear raillying Mr. *Bayle* upon the noise made by him, as he pretended, ever since he had been accus'd of being the Author of it. I know those, says he, who if accus'd of being the Authors of such a Work as the *Advice to the Refugees*, wou'd only laugh at it, and not be a jot concern'd. You have already seen, my Lord, that he never represented this as a pernicious Book, but when he had Mr. *Bayle* in his Eye; and that he spoke of it quite otherwise when this Object of his Indignation

dignation was remov'd. He spoke of the Project of Peace much at the same rate ; when he was to make his use of it against Mr. Bayle, 'twas then the Contrivance of a powerful Cabal, and corrected by the King of France's own Hand : but when he look'd at it in a confuting Spirit, all that was so terrible in his first Idea, vanish'd of a sudden. *This Work, says he, is stuff'd with Visions, and none but a Visionary is fit to confute it.*

As soon as this Book of Mr. Jurieu's appear'd, Mr. Bayle publish'd an Answer to it, intitled, *The Chimerical Cabal, or an Answer to the Fabulous Account, and the Calumnys which Mr. Jurieu has lately publish'd concerning a certain Project of Peace, and concerning a Libel intitled, Important Advice to the Refugees concerning their approaching Return into France, in his Considerations of this Libel.* Here he lets the World know what part he had in this Project of Peace, which was nothing more, as I said already, than undertaking, in complaisance to Mr. Minutoli, to communicate it to some Persons of Note who had been expressly nam'd to him. He likewise confuted all the Falshoods

and Calumnys in Mr. *Jurieu's* Narration. As to the *Advice to the Refugees*, which made the second Head in the Accusation, Mr. *Bayle* advertis'd, that he was preparing an Answer to it, in which he promis'd to expose Mr. *Jurieu's* groundless poor Conjectures and Suspicions, in such a manner as he hop'd wou'd fully satisfy the World. In the mean time he gave a kind of Prelude to this Answer; in which, after agreeing with Mr. *Jurieu* that the Author was a Protestant, he undertook to prove, by the strongest probable Reasons, that this Libel must have been written in *France*. Accordingly he scan'd all Mr. *Jurieu's* Reasonings and Presumptions, and shew'd that they concluded nothing absolutely. As this was not one of those Disputes which sometimes arise between Men of Letters upon Points of Opinion, but such as concern'd Life or Reputation, Mr. *Bayle* thought himself not oblig'd to spare his Accuser. He uncas'd him so cleverly, that the Man's Pride and Self-conceit were no longer proof against the Storm. He had immediate recourse to the Worshipful the Burgomasters of *Rotterdam*, and

and presented 'em a Petition so very singular, that I can't forbear inserting it *in terminis*.

The Sieur Jurieu, who has had the Honor of defending the Cause of God for so many Years, and by so many Labors, craves Justice from your Worships against a horrible Libel written by the Sieur Bayle, in which the said Bayle treats him as a Fripon, a Villain, an Impostor, a Slanderer, a wicked Man; and in which he treats the Princes who have shaken off the Yoke of Popery, as flagitious Men and Murderers, and says several scandalous things against the Reformation. The Sieur Jurieu implores the protecting of his Innocence, and that the said Libel be prohibited, lacerated and torn in pieces; the Author punish'd, as behoves, for Injurys so atrocious; and that the said Jurieu be permitted to justify himself publickly against those grievous Accusations, he promising to do this with Modesty and Christian Moderation; and that the said Sieur Bayle be forbid to write any more Books against the said Jurieu.

I don't believe there was ever any thing seen more violent or more burlesque than this very Petition. To desire that an Accuser impeaching on Articles

ticles of High-Treason against God and Man, shou'd be permitted to write against the Accused, and he forbid to answer in his own defence, is surely a Case without a Precedent. A Gentleman who shou'd desire his Prince's Leave to fight a Duel with his Enemy, but bound to a Tree and with his Arms pinion'd, wou'd make a much less ridiculous Request than Mr. *Jurieu's*. But his hardiness in charging Mr. Bayle before these Magistrates, with having in his *Cabal Chimerique*, treated the Princes who shook off the Yoke of Popery as flagitious Persons, and Murderers, and with having said several scandalous things against the Reformation, was a Calumny so black and so palpable, that this alone was enough to blast the Delator's Credit. The Worshipful Burgomasters of *Rotterdam* took a method much more becoming their Wisdom and Equity. They wou'd not absolutely silence these two Professors, but they found an Expedient which tended indirectly this way, at least with regard to Mr. *Jurieu*; which was, forbidding either to publish any thing on this Article till examin'd by the Pensionary of the City, and approv'd by the Burgomasters.

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masters. Mr. Bayle, who knew very well, that the Weakness of his Adversary's Accusations wou'd soon appear, when his Invectives and foul Language were ras'd, was glad that they had pitch'd upon this Expedient, and freely promis'd to obey the Order: Mr. *Jurieu* promis'd as much on his part, but he did not long sit easy under Conditions which were too hard upon a Man of his Kidney.

In the mean time no sooner was his Book against Mr. Bayle arriv'd at Geneva, but some were mightily diverted at the Romance he had grafted upon the *Sieur Goudet's* Project of Peace, a thing they knew the Resident of *France* had all along made a Jest of. Others took the matter in a serious way, and cry'd out upon the malicious turn he had given to the Politick Dreams of this Merchant. Several Persons of good Note complain'd loudly of his Indiscretion, as tending to set the Magistrates and People by the Ears, and to create a Jealousy of 'em among all the Protestants, and the Confederate Powers. Mr. *Minutoli* wrote him a Letter, in which he tax'd him with this: *I shan't answer, says he, that our Councils,*
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and others of Character among us, toucht in a point which so nearly concerns their Honor and Conscience, won't study ways of giving you the most mortifying Proofs of their just Resentment. But this I am sure of, that I shou'd be wanting to all the Rules of Equity and Justice, if I did not clear Mr. Bayle, who purely by an Accident that I am going to tell you, is beholden to me for what you are pleas'd to make such a Crime in him. Then he gave him the whole History of the Project of Peace, which agreed to a tittle with Mr. Bayle's Account; and afterwards complain'd, that he, Mr. Jurieu, wou'd draw him into the pretended Cabal, which extended from North to South. Wou'd you, says he, in Conscience take it well, that any one upon such Presumptions against your self, shou'd, without more ado, proclaim you and your Friends in print, as a set of Men void of Honor, of Faith, and Religion? He concluded with exhorting him to make Mr. Bayle Reparation, and spare him the trouble of publishing this Letter in his Friend's Justification. Mr. Jurieu receiv'd other Letters from Geneva to the same purpose, in which his Friends intreated him not to reckon upon the Cabal, he had form'd to him-

self, nor treat the *Project of Peace* as a serious matter.

But all this hinder'd not his inveighing bitterly against Mr. Bayle. He even broke his Promise to the Burgomasters of *Rotterdam*, and publish'd several small Pieces without their Participation under the Title of *Convictions*, &c. 'Tis true, not daring to speak of the Cabal any more, he confin'd himself to this Article, *That Mr. Bayle had attempted to print a Project of Peace without the Privy of the State, and contrary to its Interests and Intentions*. Thus this dangerous Cabal, which extended from North to South, and which design'd to bring about a general Revolution in *England* and *Holland*, to sink the Confederacy, and leave *France* Mistress of *Europe*, was shrunk at last to the printing of a small Pamphlet, which by Mr. *Jurieu's* own confession was full of *Visions* and *Chimeras*. The whole matter was this: Mr. *Jurieu's* Bookseller having some notice of this *Project of Peace*, pray'd Mr. Bayle to get him the printing of it: Mr. Bayle told him he had no Orders to get it printed, but if ever he had, and the thing were left to his Disposal, he shou'd have the Preference.

rence. In the mean time the Author got it printed at *Lausanne*; and Mr. Bayle having recommended this Book-feller, who was a poor Refugee, to Mr. *Minutoli*, he promis'd to send him the Sheets as they were work'd off, which yet was never done. Here's the whole Business of the printing, which Mr. *Jurieu* misrepresented with all his Art, and wou'd fain have understood to be a Crime against the State. He likewise continu'd his Accusations upon the *Advice to the Refugees*, tho they were grown perfectly ridiculous, since his being undeceiv'd as to his pretended Cabal, founded on the Project of Peace. For, as your Lordship has already seen, this Project was the thing that open'd his Eyes to see the true design of the *Advice*, and discover all the Poison in it. And now he was made to understand, that the Project was a mere Chimera, and the Cabal a Vision; did it not follow very evidently; that all his frightful Account of the *Advice* was groundless, and the Danger chimerical? But such a Confession had clear'd Mr. Bayle, and this was the least of Mr. *Jurieu's* Thoughts: So he never left twitting him with this *Advice to the Refugees*,

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fugees, and that with as much Bitterness as when first he imagin'd it the Work of a cursed Cabal, and inseparably of apiece with the Project. The manner in which his Cabal had bin unhing'd, was enough to cover most other Men with Shame, and stop their Mouths for ever: But for his part, the Grief it gave him to see it tumble, did only serve to increase his Fury. He redoubl'd his Sollicitations with the Magistrates, and forgot nothing to exasperate 'em against Mr. Bayle; but they still answer'd, that they must do Justice and hear his Defence. This distracted him; and all his Libels were full of Lamentations upon the excess of their Clemency. He thought the least they cou'd do was blowing him out off *Holland*. When he saw the Magistrates made a mock of his Accusations, he had recourse to the *Flemish* Ministers, and endeavor'd to engage them of his side; but this too came to nothing. At last he fell foul of his *Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets*, formerly so much admir'd by him, and pretended this Book was a System of Libertinism and Atheism. He likewise attack'd the *Critique Generale on the History of Calvinism*, and the *Philosophical*

phical Commentary, which he now ascrib'd to Mr. Bayle, and not to a Club of Refugee Ministers. All the violentest things his Heart cou'd frame against these Works, and particularly the first, he set forth in a Libel, intitl'd, *A short Review of the Maxims of Morality and Principles of Religion, of the Author of the Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets, &c.* He distributed this Piece to the Consistory of Rotterdam, and declaim'd before 'em against Mr. Bayle with such Violence, as to declare, *he wou'd as soon be reconcil'd to the Devil as to him.* Fine Words from a Divine! The Consistory resolv'd to examine the Accusations suggested in the *Short Review*, and Mr. Bayle signify'd, that he was ready to make his Innocence appear: But Mr. Jurieu did not think fit to bring the matter to a hearing at that time.

Mr. Bayle had carry'd his Deference for the Magistrates Order so far as to suppress the Answer at large, which he had prepar'd to Mr. Jurieu, and was resolv'd to let him talk on by himself; but when he saw this Minister wou'd not give over railing in his Libels, and that some of his Enemys made an Advantage

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vantage of his Silence, he thought he was oblig'd to defend himself. Accordingly he wrote an Answer under the Name of one of his Friends, entitl'd, *The Chimera of the Rotterdam Cabal, demonstrated from the pretended Convictions which the Sieur Jurieu has publish'd against Mr. Bayle.* This Work, which was written with less warmth than the *Cabale Chimerique*, was divided into three parts. The first was a long Preface, containing a Detail of Mr. *Jurieu's* Accusations, and their Consequences; design'd to let the Publick know the state of the Question, and on which side the Victory seem'd to incline. The second was a Confutation of all Mr. *Jurieu* had advanc'd in his *Convictions*, to justify his dream of the Cabal concern'd in the Project of Peace; and concluded with that Letter of Mr. *Minutoli's* I have spoke of. And in the third part he made some general Reflections upon the *Factum*, publish'd by Mr. *Jurieu*, concerning the *Advice to the Refugees*; and ended by overthrowing all his pretended Proofs.

Thus, my Lord, you see the whole train of this Dispute, which made so much noise in its time, and is not

yet forgot, tho very few know the true state of it. As this is one of the points of which you desir'd the most particular Account, I cou'd not avoid Prolixity and sometimes Repetition. I shall be much shorter in what concerns the true Author of the *Advice to the Refugees*.

Some discerning Persons are of opinion, that Mr. *Pelisson* is the Author of this Book, and that he sent it to Mr. *Bayle*, who publish'd it with a Preface, containing the Plan of a solid Answer to it, as I have already observ'd. This was the Opinion of Mr. *La Bastide*, who dy'd at *London*, and had known Mr. *Pelisson* thorowly, having liv'd in strict Friendship with him for above thirty Years. He fancy'd he saw Mr. *Pelisson*'s turn of Wit, his way of Reasoning, and some of his favorite Expressions in this *Advice to the Refugees*: and even wrote a Dissertation to justify his Sentiments, which was never printed, being a Parallel between the *Advice* and Mr. *Pelisson*'s other Works. He supported his Opinion by this further Circumstance, That a second Edition of it was begun by Mr. *Pelisson*'s Bookseller at *Paris*, with the Royal Licence, in *October* 1690. three months before

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

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Mr. *Jurieu* thought of ascribing it to Mr. *Bayle*; but being interrupted for sometime, was afterwards finish'd by his Widow in Jan. 1692. and publish'd with a second Royal Licence, the first not having pass'd thro all the requisite Forms. The last Licence ascribes the Interruption to this, that the Author affecting to conceal himself had made a difficulty of having the first Licence, which was granted in his own Name, register'd in the Books of the Company of Stationers at *Paris*; and to the Sickness and Death of the Bookseller. But one who was then upon the spot, has declar'd his Opinion, that the Suppression of this Work was in all probability occasion'd wholly by the Broils it had caus'd among the Refugees, and the hopes of seeing 'em more and more inflam'd; which indeed has a great appearance of Probability. Mr. *La Bastide* believ'd, that Mr. *Pellisson* was shy of declaring himself Author of the *Advice*, not only as he was born and bred a Protestant, and having several Relations and Friends among the Refugees, was loth to own a Book which tended to render 'em odious; but chiefly because having here and there let

fall Expressions somewhat too free and too forcible against the way of treating the Protestants in *France*, he had afterwards understood, that these Passages gave a distast to some considerable Persons, which oblig'd him to expunge 'em in the *Paris* Edition; tho it's true at the same time, these Passages don't all amount to one Page. It's needless adding, that the Preface to the first was suppress'd in this second Edition. They gave in the room of it only a short Advice to the Reader of two or three Periods.

Others no less discerning than those we have bin speaking of, think Mr. Bayle the Author of the *Preface* to the *Advice*, but that the Book was written by Mr. *Larroque* (Son to the famous Minister of *Roan*) who chang'd his Religion soon after. He trusted the Manuscript in Mr. Bayle's hands, who got it printed, and gave it some few Touches of his own. What confirms 'em in this Opinion is, that Mr. *Larroque* was often heard to cite this Work as his own Production. These Gentlemen think, that this is the whole Mystery, and the true reason why Mr. Bayle's Vindications appear'd weak. He

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durst not freely give his Opinion either of the Book or of the Author, who had always bin his Friend.

Last of all, there are a great many who believe, that Mr. *Bayle* was the Author of the Book as well as the Preface, and ground their Opinion on the sprightly and agreeable manner of writing and reasoning, which runs thro the whole, and which they think is above the Capacity of either of the other two Authors. But, beside that these Rules of Criticism are very uncertain, and liable to Exceptions in the present Case; it's certain Mr. *Pelisson*, having written to a Person at *Rotterdam*, that the King offer'd Mr. *Bayle* a Reward, if he wou'd own to him he was the Author, and even promis'd to keep it a Secret, he protested he was not. He aver'd the same to those who were deepest in his Confidence; so that it must be struck out of the Catalogue of his Works: at least this is a sufficient bar for not alledging it in proof against him. He had form'd the Design of writing an Answer to it; and tho the matter was extremely delicate, there's reason to think he wou'd have executed it, if Mr. *Jurieu* had not made so much
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noise. Be that as it will, had Mr. Bayle bin really Author of this Book, which I dare not affirm, this wou'd not justify Mr. *Jurieu's* Transports and Excesses. That black Spite with which he turn'd Informer against his old Friend, is a Note of Infamy which he will never be able to claw off. I have shewn, my Lord, that on a Supposition Mr. Bayle was Author of this *Advice*, it was capable of a favorable Construction: but since he constantly deny'd it, common Justice won't allow the citing of it with a design to blacken his Memory; none but *Jurieu's* are capable of this. Besides, the *Advice* had this good effect, that it oblig'd some of the best Pens among the Refugees publicly to disclaim those Libels which the Author had made a handle of, and to shew they were the Works of private Persons, without Countenance or Authority. It also gave 'em an Occasion of confuting all the other Objections.

1692. Mr. Bayle finding Mr. *Jurieu* wou'd not give over writing against his Books, resolv'd to make Reprisals. But that they who understood not the *French* Tongue might be the better able to make a Judgment of the Genius of his Adver-

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Adversary, he chose to write in *Latin*. There was indeed something of Malice in this choice; for Mr. Bayle knew very well, that Mr. Jurieu was no great Master of the *Latin* Tongue, and that he wou'd be hard put to it to reply. He took his *System of the Church* for the Subject of his Criticism. This was touching Mr. Jurieu in a tender part; because this Work had pass'd for the best he had publish'd, and the only one which Mr. Nicole judg'd worth answering. Mr. Bayle took the Name of *Carus Larebonius*; and fancying there was no Title the Ear was more us'd to than that of *Janua Linguarum reſerata*, by Comenius, he intitl'd his Book, *Janua Cœlorum reſerata cunctis Religionibus, à celebri admodum viro, Domino Petro Jurieu, &c.* Here he made appear, that Mr. Jurieu, as much an Enemy as he was to Toleration, had notwithstanding, to distinguish himself by a particular System, flung open the Gates of Heaven to Jews, Pagans, and particularly to all the different Sects of Christians; and thereby he intirely ruin'd his System. Tho he cou'd write elegantly in the *Latin* Tongue, as appears by the Theses I spoke of, yet here he affected

the Stile and Method of the Scholastick Philosophers, which gave a relish of his Book. 'Tis a pity, for he handled his Subject with great address, and maintain'd throughout the whole Work that force of Reasoning which was so natural to him: he gave his Arguments such a degree of Evidence, that Mr. *Jurieu* never attempted to answer 'em.

Some time after Mr. *Bayle* publish'd a Work intitl'd, *The Project and Fragments of a Critical Dictionary*. The first Sheets of it were printed above a Year before, and wou'd have been publish'd soon after, if Mr. *Jurieu* had not struck in to interrupt him in his Studys. The Bookseller pressing him to go on with that Design, he drew up in some hast, and on the first Matter that Chance presented, about Twenty Articles, to give a more just Idea of his Design. He introduc'd 'em by a long Preface inscrib'd to Mr. *Du Rondel* then a Professor in the *Belles Lettres* at *Mastricht*, in which he gave him an Account of the Plan of this new Dictionary. The Design of it, says he, is to be a Collection of the Falshoods in all other Dictionaries, and a Supplement of what they

they had omitted. He propos'd, for example, under the word *SENECA*, to collect all the Falshoods that had been ever advanc'd concerning this Philosopher; so that 'twas only consulting this Article to make a right Judgment upon every thing to be met with concerning *Seneca* in any Author whatsoever: if the Matter were false, 'twas mark'd in the Collection; and if it was not on a foot of Falshood there, the Reader might reckon upon it as true. But besides the *personal* Articles which were to furnish his Dictionary, he promis'd to intermix such as are *real*, that is, such as relate not to Persons, or Places, and consequently are not to be met with in any Historical or Geographical Dictionary; he gave two of these as a Specimen, one upon the *Hippomanes*, and the other on the *Day*. He even gave ground to hope that he shou'd not confine himself within these Spaces, how wide soever they may seem; but that he wou'd make Excursions on all sorts of Authors as occasion presented. He afterwards answer'd the Objections against this Design, and shew'd that the usefulness of such a Critical *Collection* did hardly fall short of that of any other
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other Science, not excepting even the Mathematicks. And this gave him occasion to remark, That tho we can't condemn Historical Pyrrhonism, with regard to infinite Facts, yet 'tis certain there are a great many others which may be prov'd to a high degree of Certainty.

He likewise own'd he was not insensible of the Difficultys of executing such a Design as it ought to be; but was still more sensible of his own inability for the Undertaking: That for this Reason he confin'd himself to the giving only the first Draughts of such a Work, to consist of one Volume in *Folio*; and shou'd leave the care of continuing it to Persons better qualify'd, in case they shou'd think the Design improv'd with all requisite Alterations, not unworthy their Pens. But as he foresaw that the Sketch which he propos'd had extent enough to cost him a great deal of trouble; and besides was very distrustful of the manner in which he intended to carry it on, he had resolv'd to hazard some Fragments of it beforehand, on purpose to feel the Pulse of the Publick, and profit by the Censures of the Judicious. This Preface was follow'd by

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some Articles of several kinds, according to the Plan he had form'd.

The Articles exhibited against Mr. Bayle, on occasion of his *Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets, &c.* having not been as yet debated in the Consistory of Rotterdam; thro Mr. Jurieu's tardiness, this Informer resolv'd at last to move for a Trial the following Year. Mr. Bayle apply'd likewise to the Consistory, and demanded Reparation of the heavy Calumnys which Mr. Jurieu had publish'd against him; and he had some hopes that this Affair wou'd now be brought to an issue, when Mr. Jurieu obtain'd an Appeal to the Synod which was to meet soon after in *Zurich Zee*. Mr. Jurieu appear'd there in Person; but spoke not a syllable of this Process, nor wou'd consent that the Acts of the Consistory shou'd be laid before 'em; tho the Consistory had expressly order'd their Deputys so to do. This oblig'd Mr. Bayle to publish a Pamphlet against his Adversary, intitled, *New Advice to the little Author of the little Books.*

For two Years past Mr. Jurieu had 1693.
stir'd Heaven and Earth to exasperate the Magistrates against Mr. Bayle, with-

without the least effect from all his intriguing. The Changes which King *William* made in the Regency of *Rotterdam* in 1692. had given him mighty hopes of succeeding; but the new Magistrates declar'd, as their Predecessors had done before, that they wou'd do Justice, and hear Mr. *Bayle's* Defence if there were occasion. This threw Mr. *Jurieu* into such a Rage, that he resolv'd to hazard all rather than not have his Revenge. The Year 1693. afforded him an opportunity which he wou'd not let slip. The War began to sit heavy on *France*, tho she seem'd to triumph on all sides. The great Efforts she had made to keep a Superiority over her Enemys, had drain'd her of Men and Mony. If she had been able to bring about a Peace in this Conjunction, it must have been advantageous to her Interests in all respects. She therefore aspir'd after it with an extraordinary Ardor. In this disposition, the better to conceal her Steps towards obtaining it, she dextrously ingag'd some of the Neutral Powers to break it to the Allies, letting 'em understand that she was inclin'd to sacrifice a part of her Conquests

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quests to restore Peace to *Europe*. The Pope had the Year before made the first Overtures to the Emperor, the King of *Spain*, and the Duke of *Savoy*. *France* had so intirely refer'd her self to the Pope, that she had given him a *Carte blanche* to treat for her. But not one of the Allies wou'd hearken to his Proposition. Finding her self repuls'd on this side, she endeavour'd to draw the *United Provinces* to a Treaty. She offer'd 'em a sufficient Barrier, and an intire liberty of Commerce, assuring 'em they shou'd have the settling of all the Articles relating to Trade. But these Offers were rejected; and some Persons of great Note moving that they might enter into a Treaty on these Preliminarys, were silenc'd in such a manner, as put 'em out of a condition of carrying on any Negotiation. Mr. *Jurieu* observing these Dispositions, apply'd himself to some great Men of King *William's* Court; and reviving the Affair of the *Project of Peace*, which I have said so much of already, represented Mr. *Bayle* as an Emissary of *France*. He had the less difficulty in persuading 'em to what he wou'd, as these Courtiers found their Account too well in conti-

continuing the War, to desire to see an end of it so soon. Accordingly instead of examining the Allegation, they made a Report of it to King *William*, and assur'd him there was a Cabal in *Holland* driving on a Peace; that Mr. *Bayle* was one of the principal Members of it, and had even the boldness to attempt printing a Project to this purpose drawn up by the Court of *France*. They put him in mind that the Peace in 1678. had been carry'd on by Writings of the same kind, dispers'd in *Amsterdam* and elsewhere; and forgot not to give a malicious Turn to the friendly Offices done to Mr. *Bayle* by several Persons of Distinction, who had no Affection for the House of *Orange*. This great Prince, who had not the leisure to examine into this Chimerical Project, and who undoubtedly knew not that this Affair had pass'd above two Years before, was alarm'd at this Notice. He order'd the Burgomasters of *Rotterdam* immediately to deprive Mr. *Bayle* of his Professor's Place and his Pension: and the Order was obey'd without either citing or hearing him, as they had promis'd. Thus was Innocence oppress'd by the Spite and Jealousy

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lousy of a half-craz'd Divine, and by the Injustice and Partiality of some great Men, whose Merit shone with much less Lustre than their Fortunes!

Mr. *Jurieu* took care not to reveal this Mystery of Iniquity. Not daring for a long time past to speak a word more of the Cabal of *Geneva*, he confin'd himself, as we have seen, to the *Advice to the Refugees*, and wou'd insinuate that this Book had been the real Cause of Mr. *Bayle's* Disgrace: As if King *William* had so tender a regard for the Refugees, as to revenge the outrage done 'em by the Author of the *Advice*! But he was infinitely more concern'd at the Business of Peace; and believ'd, upon the Report made him, that Mr. *Bayle* did really solicit it on the part of *France*, and in concert with some Persons of the *United Provinces*, whom the King had treated with extreme Severity. Alas! Mr. *Bayle* never had such a Thought, and if he had, never was there a Man less fitted for carrying on a State-Negotiation: All who had any acquaintance with him, must do him this justice; and you, my Lord, knew him too well not to be convinc'd of it. Given up wholly to
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reading, and engag'd in Metaphysical Speculations, he was utterly unacquainted with the Myfterys of State. And how is it possible he shou'd set up for a Pacificator of *Europe*? He surviv'd this Disgrace with a Philosophical Constancy, and even with too much indifference, especially with regard to his Fortune. The heaping up Wealth was the least of his Cares, because in reality he had no need of it. His Temperance and Sobriety supply'd all, so that possessing little he knew no lack. Yet not that his Condition was Indigent, very far from it. He made no bustle to get into other Business; he found himself freer now, and more at his own disposal, dismiss'd from the irksom drudgery of teaching and reading Lectures. This blessed Independence charm'd him so intirely, that he wou'd not make use of a Privilege, the Regency were willing to allow him, of teaching the Children of the Counsellors of *Roterdam* in private, who passionately desir'd he wou'd. His Friends did all they cou'd to persuade him to it, representing that this wou'd be an authentick proof of his Innocency, and of the Malice of his Enemys; but he

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he always answer'd, he was oblig'd to those very Enemys [for the Repose and Tranquillity they had procur'd him ; nor was he much concern'd at the rash Judgments which might be pass'd upon him. This was not the only Instance he had given of a Firmness of Mind truly Philosophical.

Mr. Bayle wou'd not give himself the trouble of confuting the *Short Review* of his *Reflections on Comets*, &c. for several reasons; as, That Mr. *Jurieu* had not appear'd to his Summons and Challenges to make good the Charge against him: That after having remov'd this Cause from the Consistory to the Synod, he had let four Synods pass without taking any notice of it: That his Book on Comets contain'd a satisfactory Answer to all the Delator's Exceptions: And that in fine he had thoughts of giving a new Edition of this Work, with several additional Explanations and Solutions, for quieting the Scruples of tender Minds, and silencing all the Cavils of knavish Disputants or false Thinkers. But finding in *February* 1694. that Mr. *Jurieu* had got Commissioners nam'd in the Consistory for examining this Affair anew ; and fear-

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ing it might be transacted in a summary way, without notice to make his Defence, he judg'd it absolutely necessary to draw up a kind of publick *Factum*, or state of the Case, as a means of Information for such of the Judges as wou'd make use of it, or to leave those without a Plea of Ignorance who wou'd not. Accordingly he publish'd a Paper intitled, *Additions to the Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets*, or an *Answer to a Libel*, intitled, *A Short Review, &c.* design'd for the Information of the Judges who are to examine this Affair. Here he expos'd the unfaithfulness of those Extracts Mr. *Jurieu* had made in his Libel: he intirely destroy'd all his Objections; shew'd in what manner the Ecclesiastical Judges ought to guide themselves to come at a just knowledg of the Difference; and address'd a Petition to all the Universitys of *Europe*, praying Judgment in those Points of Doctrine for which he was impeach'd by the Accuser. This Writing quash'd all the Proceedings design'd to be mov'd for at that time, and put an end to this Dispute.

The Count *de Guiscard* hearing that Mr. *Bayle* was out of all publick Employment,

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ployment, wou'd fain have got him into *France* for the Education of the young Count his Son. He offer'd him a thousand Crowns a Year, and assur'd him he had taken such measures with the Court of *France*, that he might enjoy a full Liberty of Conscience. But Mr. Bayle thank'd him for the Honor, and excus'd himself on the Obligations he was under of finishing his *Critical Dictionary*, which was already in the Press.

Mr. Bayle's Friends, who knew he wou'd never put his Name to any of his Works, either out of Modesty, or rather a Philosophical Indifference, intreated him to alter his Rule now ; but never cou'd conquer his aversion to this kind of Vanity. Yet he was afterwards forc'd to comply, for Reasons I shall mention. Mr. Leers his Bookseller having pray'd the States of *Holland* to grant him a Licence for the *Critical Dictionary*, the Undertakers of *Moreri* oppos'd it, alledging this Work wou'd prejudice theirs, and was in substance the same. And as they were not ignorant that Mr. Bayle had a Reluctance to the putting his Name to it, they made use of this Incident to represent his *Dictio-*

nary as a Book without Warrant or Authority. The States wou'd not refuse Mr. *Leers* a Licence, but 'twas on condition that Mr. *Bayle* shou'd publicly own he was the Author; so it was no longer in his power to conceal himself.

I must observe, that Mr. *Bayle's* great Reputation gave People such an Opinion of this Undertaking, that before it was half work'd off, the Book-feller perceiv'd he had not Copys enough for those who had bespoke it. This oblig'd him to work off a double Number of the remaining, and reprint as many of the first Sheets. I shall give your Lordship another Instance, to shew how high an Idea People conceiv'd of this *Dictionary*. A Person of the first Quality of *England*, who had a great deal of Wit and Merit, let a Friend of Mr. *Bayle's* understand, that if this Work were dedicated to him, he wou'd make the Author a Present of a hundred and fifty Guineas. This Friend press'd him earnestly to embrace an Offer, no less honourable than advantageous to him: Several others join'd in the Request, but never cou'd prevail on him. He generally pre-
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tended, that having so often ridicul'd Dedications, he wou'd never be guilty of the same Fault himself. But this was only a Colour; the true ground of his Refusal was this Lord's being then in the Ministry; and he cou'd not bring himself to complement any one in a Post at the Court of a Prince, whom he thought he had some reason to complain of. Here's a further Instance of the steddiness of his Soul, and of a perfect disinterestedness.

He publish'd his *Dictionary* about the end of 1696. after he had been 4 Years upon it. Two Reasons hinder'd his finishing it sooner; the first was, his being oblig'd to make some change in the Plan, to sute himself to the Taste of most Readers: for his original Design, as your Lordship may remember, was only to detect the Errors of former *Dictionaries*, and other Authors great and small; but having understood that a mixture of Historical wou'd be more agreeable, and better receiv'd than a tedious Collection of mere Errors, he thought it necessary to alter his Scheme; tho it render'd the greatest part of the Materials he had brought together wholly useless. Accordingly he di-

vided it into two parts : the First contain'd a succinct Narration of Facts ; the Second, an ample Commentary, containing the Proofs, Explications, necessary Discussions, and Censure of the principal Errors he had remark'd. This new Design made him alter the Title to that of an *Historical and Critical Dictionary*. The next thing which hinder'd his finishing this Work sooner, was his Curiousness in avoiding all matters to be met with in *Moreri* and other *Dictionaries*, and most other matters which he foresaw wou'd be taken into those which learn'd Men were preparing in divers Parts of *Europe*. He even industriously declin'd whatever was to be met with in some new Books, which were or might be in every bodys hands, such, for example, as Mr. *du Pin's* *Bibliothèque of Ecclesiastical Authors*. He wou'd not put his Readers to the charge of buying the same thing twice over ; tho by consulting their Interest he depriv'd himself of the greatest Fund of Matter that History furnishes, and the fairest Harvest, without any great trouble in the gathering. We may therefore easily imagine, that this *Dictionary* requir'd more time than ordinary,

ry, since the Author had affected to bring nothing into it which had been handled or digested by others. We might add a third Reason, from the change he was oblig'd to make in the choice of his Articles. By his first Scheme he shou'd have taken in the Articles *Personal* and *Real* promiscuously; but he was given to understand, that 'twere better he confin'd himself to the former; which likewise cut him out of another great parcel of his Materials. However, that the Articles of this kind which had appear'd in his Specimen might not be lost, he cast 'em at the latter end of his Work into the form of Dissertations. But when I say Mr. Bayle avoided repeating matters to be met with in other Dictionarys, as that of *Moreri*, &c. I don't mean that he did not speak of the same Persons; for 'tis certain there are a great many Articles in his Dictionary to be found in *Moreri*, but they scarce contain a Word of what *Moreri* says. Nor did this difference in the Oeconomy of the two Works lie only in the different Disposition, in the Turn, in the Manner of applying or explaining; but in the Facts and gross Materials, which were wholly

different. He even sometimes refers to *Moreri*, and contents himself with modestly glancing at the Oversights of this Author. In a word, this Dictionary of Mr. Bayle's is not a heavy Work stult with Genealogys or bare Facts; but paints out those he speaks of to the life, unfolds the Circumstances of their Lives, and the Motives of their Conduct, help'd out with Reflections which give a juster Idea, and enable us to pass a Judgment on surer grounds, and with more certainty. He treats in it of matters of Religion, Morality and Philosophy, with much Erudition; so that it's a Dictionary of an Order intirely new and singular. In the Body of each Article, he gives only a short and concise Account of the Person, but makes amends in the Commentary, or Remarks which are cast at the bottom. They are an agreeable *Miscellany*, and suited to the taste of all sorts of Readers. They contain things grave and serious for those whose aim is Instruction; and others humorous and sprightly for those who wou'd only unbend and divert themselves. But what most distinguishes this from all other Dictionaries, is that Spirit of Impartiality and

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Disinterestedness which runs thro the whole. Mr. Bayle does the part of a faithful and sincere Historian, as to what concerns Hereticks and false Religions; and not only censures, as occasion presents, the Errors of Fact to their Disadvantage, but the false Reasonings also, and false Raillerys of Controversists of what Denomination soever; and shews we must not judg of Persons or Partys, by the Writings of their Enemys.

In speaking of the antient Philosophers, he endeavors to set their Opinions in the clearest Light, and to shew the strong and the weak side of 'em: And sometimes takes a Pleasure in pushing their Arguments farther perhaps than ever themselves had done. As he had observ'd, that in matters of Religion the ignorant are always the most decisive and violent, and that each Party is so fond of its own Tenets as to think 'em infallible, which has produc'd infinite Mischiefs in the World; he endeavors to work Men to a greater Moderation in their Opinions, and more becoming the Weakness of the human Understanding. 'Twas this put him upon urging the Difficultys of the *Manicheans*

cheans on the Origin of Evil, and the Permission of Sin. His Design was to make those who pronounce with so much Positiveness and Arrogance upon all points of Religion, in some degree sensible, that a ridiculous Sect can make Objections, very hard to get over or account for. He wou'd fain mortify human Reason, or at least check it in its precipitate Judgments, and its adopting Opinions without a fair Examination. The greatest part of our Theologists appear'd to him too decisive, and he was for having People speak but doubtfully on things of a doubtful nature. In this Disposition he took an ill-natur'd Pleasure in shocking their Assurance, and shewing, that some Truths which pass for evident, are obscur'd and surrounded with so many Difficultys, that 'twere more prudent in many Cases to suspend their Decisions. He also endeavor'd to inspire the same Temper with regard to Historical matters. A thorow Experience had render'd him difficult on this Head. He had discuss'd so many Facts, never call'd in question by the Body of the Learn'd, and which he had actually discover'd to be false, that he was grown suspicious of all, and gave credit to

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Historians only conditionally, and till he cou'd come at further Information. In this Disposition he inculcated to his Readers the avoiding precipitate Judgments, and not too lightly believing all they meet with in History.

This Work was receiv'd by the Publick with the same Eagerness as all his other Productions; and the best Judges did not think it at all below the Opinion conceiv'd of it. Yet it was not possible it shou'd please all the World. As soon as it appear'd in *France*, the Booksellers of *Paris*, who had a design of reprinting it, apply'd to the Chancellor for a Licence; who order'd the *Abbé Renaudot*, Author of the *Gazet*, to examine whether there was any thing in it against the State, or the Romish Religion. This Abbot made his Report, *That the very worst things said for fifty Years past against the Catholick Religion, were to be found in the several parts of this Dictionary: That the Catholick Authors were abus'd; that there were Elogys all along on the Calvinist Ministers; and whatever cou'd render the Reign of Louis the XIV. odious, with regard to the Revocation of the Edict of Nants, and the Complaints of the Refugees: That there was a visible Affec-*

Affectation in the whole, of raking up whatever was most blackning and injurious to the Persons of the late Kings of France. This Judgment was pardonable in an Abbot, and a Pensioner to the Court, and one bred up in Principles of Superstition and Slavery. Had he kept to those two Points to which the Chancellor's Order confin'd him, they might have got him to pass it; but he wou'd needs assume the Airs of a learned Man and a Critick, and he thought a rigid Casuist. On the other hand, Mr. *Jurieu*, who had bin criticiz'd in several places of the Dictionary, gather'd up some Extracts from Letters, written either by Bigots, or Enemy's to his Adversary; and according to his old Custom, suppress the Authors Names, and join'd 'em to the *Abbé's* Judgment. But finding all these Pieces together did not blacken Mr. Bayle and his Dictionary as much as he desir'd, he added Remarks of his own, in which he pour'd out all his Gall; and intitl'd the whole, *The Judgment of the Publick, and of the Abbé Renaudot in particular, on the Sieur Bayle's Critical Dictionary.* He got this Libel distributed to the Synod then sitting at *Delft*, and cabal'd as much as possible.

possible to obtain a Condemnation of the *Critical Dictionary*: but the Synod had no regard to his Sollicitations, nor wou'd they so much as deliberate on the matter.

The Consistory of *Roterdam* signifying to Mr. Bayle, that he had taken somewhat too great a liberty in his Article on *David*, and other places of his Dictionary, he promis'd to give 'em all possible Satisfaction. In the mean time he publish'd a Paper, intitul'd, *Reflections on a Pamphlet stil'd, The Judgment of the Publick, &c.* in which he advertis'd, that he was drawing up a Defence, which in the Opinion of all unprejudic'd Readers shou'd demonstrate the Unfairness of his Censors. This Apology was to be printed at the beginning, or the end of the second Edition of his *Dictionary*. He reserv'd almost every thing considerable against the pretended *Judgment of the Publick*, to this Defence; and confin'd himself to a few Observations, which tho drawn up carelessly and in a hurry, did yet serve to expose the ridiculousness of Mr. *Jurieu's* Accusations and Extracts from his anonymous Letters. What he said to justify his Criticisms in the *Dictionary* on some of Mr.

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Jurieu's Books, of which he had formerly spoke advantageously in his other Writings, was very curious and judicious. As to the *Abbé Renaudot's* Judgment, he found it so full of Mistakes, Falshoods, and Impertinences, that he declar'd, if ever he confuted it, it shou'd not be till he was certify'd, that the Author avow'd it for his, such as it was printed in *Holland*. This *Abbé*, who had no design of making this Judgment publick, and therefore had not bin over exact in drawing it up, dreaded Mr. *Bayle's* returning to the Charge, notwithstanding his Declaration; and in this fright apply'd to the late Mr. *De Wit*, to whom he was known, and entreated him to oblige Mr. *Bayle* not to write against him, promising never to meddle with him more. Mr. *Bayle* was glad of this occasion of shewing his Deference for Mr. *De Wit*, who had honor'd him in a particular manner with his Friendship; and freely consented to a perpetual Truce. This, my Lord, is the reason of his taking no notice of this difference in the second Edition of his *Critical Dictionary*. He even carry'd the Civility so far, as not to insert in it his *Reflections on the Judgment of*

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the Publick, &c. how necessary soever this might be. He contents himself with citing 'em, and referring his Reader thither. I must here observe, that Mr. St. Evremond, who had a particular Esteem for Mr. Bayle, and read his Dictionary with a world of Pleasure, wou'd give himself the trouble of defending him against Mr. Renaudot. But as he saw that this Abbé's writing was only a mere Declamation, he thought it best to answer him in that fine and delicate Irony of which he was so much a Master.

In 1699. Mr. Bayle gave a third Edition of his *Reflections on Comets*, with an Advertisement of the Reasons why the Stile was all along that of a Roman Catholick, whether the Subject was Religion or Politicks; and why this Edition was not, as he had promis'd, enlarg'd with new Proofs, and new Answers to the Difficultys. He accounts for the first, by telling the occasion of his writing this Book; the design of having it printed at *Paris*, and some other Particulars mention'd before. As to the second Article, he says, that having consider'd this Book was already but too like those Rivers which make their

their Course by continual windings, he cou'd insert no more Digressions without rendring it perplext in the reading; so that he reserv'd his Additions for a new Tome, which shou'd be printed as soon as he was a little further advanc'd in his *Critical Dictionary*, on which he was now at work.

Much about this time Mr. le Clerc publish'd a Work intituled, *Parrhasiana, or Miscellaneous Reflections on Subjects of Criticism, History, Morality, and Politics*. Here he endeavor'd to solve the Difficultys of the *Manicheans*, which Mr. Bayle had laid out in his Dictionary: and to overthrow all these, he thought it sufficient to make an *Origenist* answer; adding, *That if a Man of this Form was able to put the Manicheans to silence, what might not be expected from those who reason'd infinitely better?* But before he enters into the matter, he declares, *That in answering the Objections of the Manicheans, he had no design of insinuating any thing to Mr. Bayle's prejudice; that he had not the least suspicion of his being a favorer of their Opinions.* He added, *That he was persuaded he had not taken the Philosophical Liberty of shewing, on many occasions, what cou'd be*
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said for and against 'em without disguise, out of any other design, than just to start Game for those whose Heads were turn'd for the Matters he treated, and not to favor those whose Reasons he urg'd : That, in fine, this was a piece of Justice Mr. Bayle had a right to demand from his Readers, and cou'd not be deny'd him.

In October of the following Year, the Princess Sophia of Hanover, and the late Queen of Prussia, then Electress of Brandenburg, made a small Tour in Holland and Flanders. You, my Lord, can't be a stranger that these illustrious Princesses are no less distinguish'd by the rare Talents of the Mind, than by their Elevation and high Rank. Their Penetration and Insight into the most profound and abstracted Sciences, has always entertain'd the wonder of those who have had the happiness to approach 'em. Nor did they disdain sometimes to discourse with Persons of Wit and Learning. When their Highnesses came to Roterdam, they let Mr. Bayle, whose Writings they had been well acquainted with, know they shou'd be glad to see him; but it being somewhat late at Night, he excus'd himself. Some days after Mr. Basnage hapning to go to the

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Hague, where these Princesses were, the Count *de Dhona*, who knew they had an esteem for Mr. Bayle, desir'd he wou'd bring him thither. He brought him soon after, and the Count presented him to their Highnesses, who receiv'd him in a very obliging manner, and did him the honour to discourse with him on matters of great importance. Mr. *Basnage* was receiv'd no less kindly; and their Highnesses desir'd the Count of *Dhona* to take 'em into his care, and wou'd have 'em go with 'em to *Delft*: but Mr. Bayle, not cut out for making his court to the Great, found means of getting off of this Journy, and took his leave at the *Hague*.

1702.

The second Edition of the *Critical Dictionary* was publish'd in the beginning of 1702. in three Volumes in *Folio*, enlarg'd to near double the bulk. Mr. Bayle distinguish'd the Additions with so much care, that they were visible at first sight. He struck out of the Article of *David* what had been disrelish'd by the Consistory of *Rotterdam*, and some Periods besides which were thought a little too free. He corrected the Errors of the first Edition, discover'd either by himself, or observ'd to him

him by others. In this last case he express'd his Acknowledgments to those who had furnish'd him with Memoirs, and fail'd not to name 'em when he thought it proper. Never was any Man farther than he from the humour of some Authors, who can't bear being contradicted, and who fly into a rage on the least attempt to undeceive 'em. He made an Addition to the Article of *Origen*, shewing, that the Answers Mr. *Le Clerc* had furnish'd his *Origenist*, were as incapable of satisfying the *Manichean* Objections on the Origin of Evil as the other Systems. 'Twas Mr. Bayle's Opinion, that natural Light enables us not to solve these Objections, whether we go upon *St. Austin's* System, or that of *Molina* and the *Arminians*; or whether we have recourse to that of the *Socinians*: From whence he concluded, there was no way but to acquiesce in Revelation, and give over reasoning in this matter. At the end of the whole Work, he inserted four long Dissertations to justify or clear some Points censur'd in his Dictionary. The first concern'd those who were scandaliz'd at his saying, there had been Atheists and *Epicureans* who excel'd

most Idolaters in purity of Manners. After having made several Reflections on this Subject, he refers, for more ample satisfaction, to the Continuation of his *Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets*, which he had formerly promis'd. The Second shews how we ought to understand what he had advanc'd touching the Objections of the *Manicheans*. He closes it with six Propositions, which being a kind of Abstract of it, I shall here set down in his own words.

1. That it is a Property of the Gospel-Mysterys, to be incompass'd with Difficultys which natural Light can't resolve.

2. That Unbelievers can't fairly draw any Advantage from this Assertion, That the Maxims of Philosophy afford no Solutions of the Difficultys they propose against the Mysterys of the Gospel.

3. That the Objections of the *Manicheans* on the Origin of Evil, and upon Predestination, ought not to be consider'd in general as bearing against Predestination; but under this particular Notion, as the Origin of Evil, the Decrees of God, &c. are some of the most inconceivable Mysterys of Christianity.

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4. That it ought to satisfy every good Christian, that his Faith is founded on the Testimony of God's Word.

5. That the *Manichean* System, consider'd in it self, is absurd, indefensible, and contrary to the Ideas of Order; that it is liable to be retorted, and not able to remove the Difficultys.

6. That on the whole, no body can be scandaliz'd at giving up the Point, but must be oblig'd to look on the Doctrines of the most Orthodox Divines (the *Calvinists*) as scandalous; because all he has said on this matter, was but the natural and unavoidable Consequence of their Opinions; and that he did only set forth in a more prolix manner what they teach in a more extensive way.

The third Dissertation was design'd to shew, that what he had said of *Pyrhonism* cou'd be no way prejudicial to Religion; and the fourth confuted the Exceptions taken at some obscene Passages in his Dictionary.

The Year after Mr. Bayle publish'd a 1703.
Book intitl'd, *An Answer to some Questions from a Country Gentleman*. This was truly no more than a Collection of several scatter'd Facts, which cou'd not well be brought into his *Critical Dictionary*,

but were nevertheless curious and instructive. He signify'd that the Design of it was to be a Work of a middle nature, betwixt those which serve for the Hours of Study, and those which serve for Recreation. In this Thought he only touch'd slightly upon some matters which might have been treated with more depth; he turn'd cursorily from one Subject to another, on purpose to create Variety; and when oblig'd to explain some Points more at large, he did it in such a manner as each Chapter might represent 'em by several different Views. In the mean time he wou'd not undertake to define the Nature or Kind of such a Book; that he left to the discretion of his Reader. He only said it resembled a sort of Writings frequent in the 16th Century, under the Title of *Varie Lectiones*, or to this purpose. 'Twas a Medley of History, Criticism, polite Learning, &c. but after all was not receiv'd with the same applause as the rest of his Works; because the greatest part of his Readers did not take his Design right, or had not a sufficient fund of Literature to turn what he furnish'd 'em to the best advantage.

1704.

At last Mr. Bayle acquitted himself

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of his so often repeated Promise of giving a Defence of his *Miscellaneous Reflections on Comets*. He publish'd two Volumes on this occasion in 1704. under the Title of, *A Continuation of the Miscellaneous Reflections written to a Doctor of the Sorbon, on occasion of the Comet which appear'd in December 1680. or an Answer to the Difficultys propos'd to the Author by Mr. ***.* In his *Miscellaneous Reflections* he had advanc'd among other things, *That Atheism was not worse than Pagan Idolatry*, and this was what wholly determin'd him to write a Defence. But when once engag'd to take up his Pen in justification of this Point, he thought himself oblig'd to satisfy several Difficultys started on other Passages in the Work; and at the same time judg'd, that he ought to regulate the Order of his Answers by that of the Objections, which were dispos'd according to the Chapters in his Book. He observ'd this method to the end of his first Tome; but for fear of rising to a greater bulk than at first design'd, he quitted it in the second, and confin'd himself intirely to his Parallel of Paganism and Atheism. Yet this second Volume was not sufficient to take in the

whole Dispute ; so that he was oblig'd to adjourn several Objections left undiscuss'd to a third Volume.

In this Work Mr. Bayle takes some exceptions at the Learned Dr. Cudworth, who to account for the formation of Plants and Animals had suppos'd I don't know what kind of *Plastick Natures*, or immaterial Substances, which regularly form'd all these Beings, without any Knowledg or Idea of their own Effects. He insinuates, that they who admit this Hypothesis, do unawares destroy the most sensible Argument for the Existence of a Deity, drawn from a Contemplation of the Universe ; and give the *Stratonic Philosophers* a handle to elude it by retorting the Argument : For when we urge the Existence of a God and Creator of all Things, from the Symmetry, Subordination, Beauty and Order of the several parts of the Universe, we manifestly suppose, that a Being which has no knowledg of what it does, nor of the Plan it is to fill up, nor of the End at which it shou'd drive, can produce nothing regular. The *Stratonists*, who pretend the World is the Effect of a blind Cause, are distress'd by this Argument ; which yet loses all

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its force if once we suppose, there are Beings which form the most regular and beautiful Parts of the Universe, without the least knowledg of what they do. Mr. *Le Clerc*, who had given an Extract of Dr. *Cudworth's Intellectual System* in his *Bibliothèque Choisie*, and had honor'd the *Plastick Natures* with his own Suffrage, undertook their defence too against Mr. Bayle in the fifth Tome of this Journal. Mr. Bayle answer'd him in *The History of the Works of the Learned* for August 1704. and Mr. *Le Clerc* reply'd in the sixth Tome of his *Bibliothèque Choisie*. Mr. Bayle wou'd not yield; he publish'd new Reflections on this Subject in *the History of the Works of the Learned* for December of the same Year; which oblig'd Mr. *Le Clerc* to defend his *Plastick Natures* with more Zeal than ever, and bestow 'em an Article in his 7th Tome of the *Bibliothèque Choisie*. And here he also resum'd the Dispute begun in his *Parrhasiana* on the Doctrine of the *Manicheans*, and defended his *Origenist* against Mr. Bayle's attacks in his *Critical Dictionary*.

On another hand, Mr. *Bernard*, making an Extract of the Continuation of
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the *Miscellaneous Reflections*, in his *Account of the Republick of Letters*, for February and March 1705. attack'd Mr. Bayle in his advancing, that the Proof of the Existence of a Deity from general Consent was not solid; and on his Parallel of Atheism and Paganism: but propos'd his Objections with much decency, and deference for Mr. Bayle. *As I am persuaded*, says he, *that he sincerely aims at Truth, and is besides preparing a third Volume; I'm satisfy'd, without having any need to consult him, that he won't take it ill if I propose some Difficultys, as they occur to my Thoughts; while I observe the Rules of Civility, and write with the esteem and respect I profess for his Person and Merit.*

Lastly, There appear'd about this time a Work intitled, *The Conformity of Faith and Reason, or a Defence of Religion against the principal Difficultys scatter'd in Mr. Bayle's Dictionary*, written by Mr. Jaquelot. He's a Minister, and has a fine Tincture of Divinity, and of the Cartesian Philosophy. He writes with a deal of Fire, and in a Style intirely form'd to gain the Applauses of the People. Then he does not industriously shun occasions of signaling himself,

himself, and discovering his Merit. He prefer'd the Honor of being Chaplain to the King of *Prussia*, to the Advantage of Minister to the Nobility at the *Hague*; which gave him an opportunity of openly renouncing the *Calvinist* System, to embrace that of the *Arminians*. After giving this short Elogy on Mr. *Jaquelot*, permit me, my Lord, to tell you the Reason which induc'd him to write against Mr. *Bayle*; it's somewhat singular. He was angry at Mr. *Bayle*'s citing his *Dissertation on the Being of a God* in the Dictionary, without giving it a higher Elogy than that of a *fine Book*. He murmur'd heavily, and made his Complaints in several places. It's true, he durst not say they were founded on his having made use of the Epithet *fine* in the Positive, instead of *very fine* in a Superlative degree, or some other sublimer Expression. He pretended the word *fine* was ironically apply'd. Mr. *Bayle* finding this, got one who was a Friend to both, to protest to him he had us'd the word in its natural signification; and he had actually us'd the same Epithet before in relation to a Book, of which no body could suspect he spoke ironically, it being

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written by Mr. *Basnage*. But no Protestations cou'd appease him: He resolv'd to revenge the Insult, and make Mr. *Bayle* suffer the punishment of his Temerity. But, tho by the Title of his Book it seem'd to be wholly design'd against Mr. *Bayle*, 'tis certain he was concern'd but in a very small part of it. The rest was only a Repetition of what Mr. *Jaquelot* had said in 2 former Books. What concern'd Mr. *Bayle*, might be reduc'd to these three Heads: The Liberty of Indifference; the Origin of Evil; and the Objections which Pyrrhonism might beget upon some reveal'd Doctrines. I must take notice of one much more considerable slur in this Title. The words *in defence of Religion* naturally led to a belief, that Mr. *Bayle* had attack'd Religion; whereas he had confin'd himself to the shewing, that the Philosophical Objections against what Theology teaches concerning the Origin, and the Consequences of Sin, are so strong, that our Reason is too weak to solve 'em; and that therefore we ought to have the same regard to the Mystery of Predestination, as to all the other Gospel-Mysteries; believe on the Authority of God, tho we can't compre-

comprehend, nor reconcile 'em to the Maxims of Philosophy. I ought not to forget, that Mr. *Jaquelot*, notwithstanding his Resentment, declar'd, He had no design of arraigning either the Person or Heart of Mr. Bayle. *I have an esteem for him*, adds he, *on account of his Learning, Wit, Penetration, and all those fine Talents which distinguish a Man in the Republick of Letters.* I say it once again, continues he, *I have no design of scanning his Intention: That I leave to the Judgment of God and his own Conscience.* He declares these are Difficultys which he proposes, purely to provoke others to find out a Solution of 'em.

You can't be ignorant, my Lord, that 1705. several Persons of good worth had often invited Mr. Bayle into *England* for the sake of his Conversation; but he always refus'd their Offers, tho advantageous, and truly becoming the Persons who propos'd 'em. In 1705. the Earl of *Albemarle* made him a Proposal of coming to live in his Family, till his Son, my Lord *Bury*, shou'd be at a proper Age to come under his care. He was even pleas'd to write him a very obliging Letter on this Subject; but Mr. Bayle was too much in love with his Solitude
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to quit it. He thank'd his Lordship for his Goodness, and pray'd him not to take it ill that he did not accept of the Honour. For some time past he had been employ'd in correcting, and making a Supplement to his Dictionary; and 'twas purely to unbend in the Intervals of this painful Work, that he first undertook his *Answers to the Country Gentleman's Questions*. But the several Attacks upon him oblig'd him to alter the Scheme: *the Answers to the Country Gentleman* were no longer any more than Accessorys; his Defences became the principal Subject of this Work. He publish'd the second and third Volumes of 'em at the same time. In the second Tome he gave some Reflections on a Treatise *De Origine Mali*, written by Dr. King Archbishop of Dublin, and printed in London in 1702. But as his Design was only to make some general Observations on the Principles of this illustrious Prelate, and besides that it was a hard matter then to get the Book, he contented himself with examining the Extracts from it, which Mr. Bernard had given the Publick with a great deal of Accuracy. He also in the same Volume examin'd the reason Mr. Ber-

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nard had urg'd to support his Argument for the Existence of a Deity, founded on the general Consent of Mankind. Tho Mr. Bernard's Objections were brought into a few Pages, Mr. Bayle thought fit to bestow eight Sheets in an Answer to 'em, on purpose to set this Matter in a full light. In the third Tome he answer'd all that concern'd him in Mr. Jaquelot's Book. And as the Dispute between 'em turn'd principally on the Point of the Origin of Evil, he took some pains in explaining and settling the true State of the Question, to keep this Minister from starting, and make him understand what was requisite on his part to prove the conformity of Faith and Reason. *It must be prov'd, says he, not only that there are Principles of Philosophy favourable to our Faith, but that also the particular Maxims objected, as not quadrating with our Articles, are really agreeable to 'em in a manner which may be distinctly conceiv'd. This Agreement, adds he, requires not only that your Hypothesis be accommodated to several Maxims of Philosophy, but also that it be not victoriously impugn'd by some other Maxims of Reason. Now it will be victoriously impugn'd, as long as you*
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are forc'd to defend your self by unintelligible Distinctions, or by pleading the profoundness of the Subject. Mr. Bayle at the same time declar'd, his own Opinion was exactly that of the Reform'd, and particularly of Mr. Jurieu, who in a Work intitl'd, *A Judgment of the rigid and Latitudinarian Methods of explaining Providence and Grace*, had given it up, that no Hypothesis is capable of resolving all the Difficultys which Reason may suggest on the Providence of God with regard to Sin and Evil. Mr. Bayle also answer'd to what Mr. Le Clerc had offer'd in his *Bibliothèque Choisie*, as well in defence of his *Origenist*, as of his *Plastick Natures*.

This Work rais'd a terrible Storm about Mr. Bayle. Tho he had treated his Adversarys with extreme Civility, and had even shut his Eyes to some sharp Touches from several of 'em, yet he cou'd not escape their Resentment and Indignation. Mr. Bernard took occasion in his Journal, to give a very smart Criticism on the 2 Volumes of his *Answer to the Country Gentleman's Questions*, yet said not a syllable in defence of the Authority of the general Consent of the People, but promis'd a Work expressly

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pressly on this Subject, which has not yet seen the Light. Mr. *Le Clerc* cou'd not brook Mr. Bayle's presuming to stand it out against him so long, and in so sturdy a manner. He expected he shou'd solemnly own the weight of his *Origenist's* Reasons, and make him his humble acknowledgments. His Indocility shock'd him; and without mincing the matter, he accus'd him of favoring Atheism, of endeavoring the subversion of Religion, and of denying the Goodness and Holiness of God. *I flatter'd my self, says he, that possibly he might be brought to himself, and to acknowledge the Goodness and Holiness of God in all his ways, after so fair a handle given him for getting out of this ugly business without involving his Reputation, by owning himself satisfy'd on the Dispute, and by thanking those who had remov'd his Difficultys, as is usual in Schools of Philosophy and Divinity. But as he takes a quite contrary course, and pretends he has not been solidly answer'd; 'tis fit we let him see we are not frightened at his Reasonings, and shew the ridiculousness of 'em without dallying any longer.* Then he makes a Recapitulation of the Dispute he had hitherto

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maintain'd in the Person of an *Origenist*; and after having quitted this Character, he endeavours to answer Mr. Bayle in his own Name. As the greatest Difficulty of the *Manicheans* concerns the Eternity of Punishments, Mr. Le Clerc rejected *Origen's* Opinion which denies it, and contented himself with saying, That the nature of the Punishments of another Life is not clearly conceiv'd by us; That we don't know but there may be divers kinds of acute Punishments at first, yet varying according to the heinousness of the Sins; nor whether God remitting these violent Inflictions afterwards, mayn't be content with abandoning those who had obstinately despis'd his Grace to the remorse of their own Conscience, which shall reproach 'em with their Ingratitude, and disquiet 'em much more by Reflections on the loss of that Felicity they shall see others enjoy. If God, says he, leave the condemn'd in this state (which however I don't determine, for he is not oblig'd to execute his Threats in the utmost rigor) 'tis probable their condition may be supportable, and that they may have cause to confess the Goodness of the Creator; since instead of annihilating 'em, as their Disobedience deserv'd, he preserves their Beings, and

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leaves 'em in a state not unsupportable. Mr. Le Clerc deliver'd these Thoughts with a great deal of Caution. He look'd on 'em as Conjectures, and declar'd, He did not pretend to advance 'em as undoubted Evangelical Doctrines. Nor was he less offended at the small regard Mr. Bayle had shewn for his *Plastick Natures*, and his stiff manner of resisting all the Lights he had taken the pains to furnish him. A Conduct so untoward, did easily persuade him, that Mr. Bayle attack'd Religion thro the sides of his *Plastick Natures*. At first, says he, I believ'd his want of understanding Dr. Cudworth's mind aright, might be the cause of his judging on that Hypothesis as he did: But, adds he, when I saw him unwilling to receive any Explications upon it, after I had three times successively set him right, I cou'd no longer doubt but the turn he had given this matter, was purely from a design of justifying Atheists. Then he repeated a part of what he had said before on this Subject, and continued to maintain there was no room for a Retortion from the *Stratonists*; since God was the Author of those *Plastick Natures*, and since they acted only by his Direction.

Mr. Bayle oppos'd these new Attacks of Mr. *Le Clerc*, in a Work intitl'd, *An Answer for Mr. Bayle to Mr. Le Clerc, upon occasion of the 3d and 13th Articles of the 9th Tome of his Bibliotheque Choisie*. As he saw Mr. *Le Clerc* attack'd him in Person, and did all he cou'd to render him odious, he wou'd spare him no longer, and declar'd *he was guilty of rash judging and calumny*. But because the Accusations were chiefly groundd on the Consequences drawn from his Doctrine concerning the Origin of Evil; he gave a Summary of it under the three following Propositions.

1. Natural Light and Revelation clearly inform us there is but one Principle of all things, and that this Principle is infinitely perfect.

2. The means of reconciling the moral and physical Evil of Man with the Attributes of this one infinitely perfect Principle of all things, surpasses our Philosophical Lights; so that the Objections of the *Manicheans* leave Difficulty behind, which human Reason is not able to satisfy.

3. Notwithstanding this, we must strenuously believe what the Light of Nature and Revelation teach concern-

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ing the Unity and infinite Perfection of God ; as by Faith, and by our Submission to the Divine Authority, we believe the Myſterys of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.

Mr. Bayle maintain'd, That this was the Doctrine of almost all kind of Christians ; and added, *He was very ſure no one cou'd ever prove, that theſe three Propoſitions were not what he had conſtantly taught in his Works ; or if he had ſeem'd to talk otherwiſe in ſome places, he had maintain'd theſe three contrary Propoſitions in others.* He afterwards confuted all Mr. Le Clerc's Charge againſt him, particularly that by which he imputes to him the maintaining that God was neither good nor holy, from his having ſaid, That Reason comprehends not how the Goodneſs and Holineſs of God are reconcilable with Sin, and with the Miſerys of Mankind. He compar'd this Opinion with that of Mr. Le Clerc, and ſhew'd, that were each of 'em to diſpute with a *Manichean*, he by his Principle ſhou'd be able to ſtop his Mouth, while Mr. Le Clerc muſt be quite overwhelm'd with the weight of his Objections. He likewiſe ſhew'd, that the Crime which this Divine had made

of his affirming, That no Christian System is capable of satisfying the Objections of the *Manicheans*, rebounded upon himself; since to answer 'em he had been oblig'd to quit all these Systems, and to form one intirely new, which after all was founded only on bare Conjectures. He thought not fit to say any thing farther concerning the Answer of Mr. *Le Clerc* under the name of an *Origenist*; but only shew'd, that what he had offer'd anew on that account, was a mere repetition of what he had said before; and that the Objections remain'd in their full force. In fine, he offer'd to submit this Dispute to the Decision of the Universitys of *Holland*; and advis'd him to present Extracts of the Propositions condemn'd by him in his Works; and to pray their Judgment upon this Question of Fact, *Whether the Propositions transcrib'd from Mr. Bayle's Books are a sufficient Proof of the Charge Mr. Le Clerc has drawn up against him? Mr. Le Clerc pretends they are; Mr. Bayle denys it, and farther alleges, they contain nothing contrary to the Confessions of the Reform'd Churches of France and Holland.*

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He charg'd Mr. *Le Clerc* with contradicting himself on occasion of the *Plastick Natures*. For example, Mr. *Le Clerc* had first maintain'd, that these Beings were only *Instruments in the Hand of God*; That God regulated all their Actions; That they were properly *instrumental Causes produc'd and apply'd by the principal Cause*: And yet he pretended that this Hypothesis of Dr. *Cudworth* differ'd from that of the *Cartesians*. But Mr. Bayle let him see, that in this sense it was tantamount to the Hypothesis of these Philosophers; for tho they suppose God the immediate Author of all the Effects of Nature, yet they never deny'd that Bodys were properly the Instruments God uses for the production of Plants and Animals. And therefore he insist'd, that these Natures ought to be consider'd as active Principles executing the Plan of God, the Author of their Virtue and Existence; yet without standing in need of being continually urg'd on and directed in such a manner as Workmen are who execute the Plan, suppose of an Engineer. Now he maintain'd, that according to this Explication, which must have been that of Dr. *Cudworth* himself,

since Mr. *Le Clerc* said, that this Learned Man rejected *Des Cartes's* Hypothesis, the Retortion of the *Stratonists* wou'd be just. Mr. *Le Clerc* finding himself pinch'd by this Difficulty, rectify'd his Hypothesis, and answer'd, That he never meant, the Plastick Natures were passive Instruments; which, says he, was against Dr. *Cudworth's* Opinion. He added, that they act under the direction of God; That God guides and conducts them still, tho we know nothing of the manner how; That if they act regularly of themselves, still they act under the direction of God, who interposes in what manner, and as often as he pleases; That all the difference between this, and the Operations of brute Beasts *regularly performing several Actions when train'd to 'em by Men*, tho they neither know what they do, nor the reason why, is, that we know nothing of the manner of God's *interposing*, whereas we know the manner how Men intervene with regard to the Actions of Brutes. Mr. *Bayle* reply'd, that a Creature destitute of all knowledg, may, without doubt, by the direction of God, perform many things with as much regularity as any intelligent

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gent Being; That there was no difficulty in comprehending this: but at the same time 'twas necessary this Direction shou'd be perpetual and uninterrupted; and consequently 'twas necessary that God shou'd apply and direct the Plastick Natures by an undiscontinued Act, from the time their Operation began till such time as it was perfected: Whence it necessarily follow'd, that he interven'd so, as that the Plastick Nature was only a passive Instrument in his hands; and therefore that Dr. *Cudworth* cou'd not avoid the Retortion, but by supposing what the *Cartesians* suppose. He added, that the Example of Beasts strengthen'd the Difficulty; because if we rightly consider all the Services they do us, we shall find that in every Instance where their own Knowledg serves 'em not as a Guide, they must be urg'd on and directed as if they were mere Machines. He alledg'd the Authority of Mr. *Leibnitz*, who had allow'd the Retortion of the *Stratonists* just, on a supposition that the Plastick Natures were active Principles, and true efficient Causes. I don't know what Dr. *Cudworth* might have said to this Dispute had he been alive; but

but to me it seems evident, that this Learned Man look'd on the Plaftick Natures as Causes purely instrumental. Mr. *Wife* in his *Confutation of the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism*, which is an improv'd Abridgment of Dr. *Cudworth's* System, fupposes the fame thing. He afferts, that the Plaftick Natures are only instrumental Causes; and compares 'em, as Dr. *Cudworth* does, to paffive Instruments, fuch as a Saw, a Hammer, the Hands of Workmen, &c. Which fhews that thefe Gentlemens Hypothefis is much the fame with that of the *Cartefians*. Had Mr. *Bayle* understood *Englifh*, and been able to read their Works, he had made his advantage of 'em.

This Answer ferv'd only to incense Mr. *Le Clerc* the more. He answer'd it in the 10th Tome of his *Bibliothèque Choifie*, and complain'd in his turn of the Author's manner of treating him. He endeavor'd to make good his former Charge, and examin'd the three Propositions to which Mr. *Bayle* had reduc'd his Doctrine. He perfifted in maintaining, that 'tis the bufinefs of our Reason to form juft Ideas of the Goodnefs and Holinefs of God; and that to admit

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admit any others, is in the first place denying these, and in the next place having none at all. In a word, he maintain'd, that we ought to judg of the Perfections of God by our natural Lights; and that if we once suppose, that what is unjust according to human Ideas, is not so according to the divine, we must no longer pretend to talk upon the moral Attributes or Perfections of God, since we know nothing of 'em; and that this Distinction leads directly to Irreligion and Atheism.

In answer to Mr. Bayle's Proposal of submitting their Dispute to the Judgment of the Universitys of *Holland*, he advis'd him to solicit their Approbation of his Works; and if they declar'd they found nothing in 'em contrary to their own Opinion, he wou'd publicly acknowledge his Error in denying that his Doctrines were agreeable to theirs. As to the *Plastick* Natures, he judg'd it unnecessary to say any more of 'em: *I look upon Mr. Bayle as too fully confuted, to touch upon that Matter again: He has found it impossible to shew, that this Opinion gives Atheists a handle for retorting one of our best Arguments against 'em. This was his principal Design, and in this*
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The Life of Mr. Bayle.

he has miscarry'd. He added, that he did not believe Mr. *Leibnitz* would upon second Thoughts find the Atheists had any ground for retorting Dr. *Cudworth's* Opinion; because they who thorowly examin'd it, especially after what he had said, would see quite the contrary.

The Fruitfulness of Mr. *Jaquelot's* Pen made him soon appear again upon the Stage. He publish'd a Book intitl'd, *An Examination of Mr. Bayle's Theology, as scatter'd in his Critical Dictionary, in his Reflections on Comets, and in his Answer to the Country Gentleman; where in the Conformity of Faith and Reason is defended against his Answers.* 'Twas easily seen by this Title, that Mr. *Jaquelot* would skirmish no longer, but was resolv'd to come to a general Engagement, and fight it out desperately without giving or taking Quarter. Accordingly he never fail'd levelling at his Adversary all the deadly Strokes his Wit cou'd devise. He accus'd him anew of attacking Religion, and of pretending to prove, that a Society of Atheists might subsist altogether as well as a Society of Christians. He reply'd to what Mr. *Bayle* had answer'd concerning the

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Origin of Evil, the Permission of Sin, and the other Matters relating to these Questions; and in Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Judgment *said enough to satisfy Mr. Bayle, had he bin willing to receive satisfaction.* Yet he did not carry the Argument quite so far as Mr. *Le Clerc*, and he own'd the Incomprehensibility in part. He persisted in charging Mr. *Bayle* with a design of destroying the Liberty of Man; and maintain'd what he had formerly advanc'd, that the Controversy about Liberty, which made such a Breach among Christians, was only a Dispute about Words. If your Lordship wou'd be pleas'd to forgive my quitting the Character of a Historian for a moment, to take up that of a Philosopher, I shou'd not stick to say, that Mr. *Jaquelot* had reason of his side. The Learned may dispute till they are weary; still in spite of their Controversys, they'l all have the same kind of Free-will: and 'twere really very strange they shou'd have a different kind of Liberty, or if you will, that one set of Men shou'd be in reality free, and others not, because those are bred up in the Arminian, and these in the Calvinistical School. What's very singular in the
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matter is, that each Party appeals to his own Experience; as if all Men were not made the same way. Your Lordship perhaps will ask, why Mr. *Jaquelot* after such a Discovery shou'd abjure the Calvinistical Hypothesis to embrace that of *Arminius*? But this in all appearance proceeded from his fancying that the *Calvinists* were the Men who kept all this strife about Words: These will undoubtedly charge it upon the *Arminians*, and pretend that these Gentlemen, did they fairly reflect on what passes within 'em, and express themselves in a clear and distinct manner, wou'd easily perceive the Illusion they are under. Be that how it will, it can't be deny'd but the Research is very difficult, if we consider that Men of great Parts, and of like Sentiments in other matters, can't find an expedient for coming to any Agreement in this. Nor is any thing more usual than to see 'em mistake other Mens Opinions upon it; tho perhaps this proceeds not so much from the Obscurity of the Matter, as from the Caution which is us'd on that Subject. They who have meditated the deepest upon it, keep off in loose

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loose and general Expressions, or never explain themselves clearly ; the true reason why Opinions are often charg'd upon 'em, which they are very far from entertaining. This Method Mr. Bayle had taken, and he was charg'd with destroying Man's Free-will ; tho he kept exactly to the Calvinistical Hypothesis. Mr. Locke must have done the same, if it be true, as I have heard some men say, that Mr. Le Clerc cou'd not comprehend what his Opinion was in this Point. At first he imagin'd him to be an *Arminian*, and was afterwards surpriz'd to find him talk like a *Calvinist*. But I have been assur'd, there's neither ambiguity nor inconsistency in any thing he has said on this Subject ; and that a small degree of attention, free from prejudice, is sufficient to make a Man perceive that his Opinion is conformable to Mr. Bayle's System, and to that of all the greatest Philosophers ; and that he had set this Matter in a much clearer light than any one before him.

Mr. Jurieu made the last effort about this time, to let the World know he was still alive, and that his Fire was not quite spent. He publish'd a small Anonymous Book, intitled, *The Rotterdam*

dam *Philosopher* accus'd, arraign'd, and convicted; and did not forget to repeat most of what he had ever alledg'd against Mr. Bayle, without taking any notice of the Answers made him. He had formerly declar'd against Messieurs *Jaquelot* and *Bernard* with his usual violence, and accus'd 'em of Heterodoxy before the Synods: he had likewise play'd Mr. *Le Clerc* some scurvy pranks, and made some rude attacks upon him not long before: but when he saw how these Gentlemen began to handle Mr. Bayle, he strain'd hard to speak well of 'em. 'Tis true, he put 'em in mind of their old Disgraces, but he did it by a side Wind. He introduc'd Mr. Bayle's Friends rejecting the Testimony of these three Ministers. Mr. *Jaquelot*, he makes 'em say, *had been piqu'd at Mr. Bayle's not speaking of his Book of the Existence of a Deity with esteem enough.* Besides, he's a Person something more than suspect, and who in some differences he has had, has not acquitted himself with Honor. Mr. *Bernard* has been admonish'd by the Synods; Mr. *Le Clerc* is a Pelagian, a Socinian, convicted of Heresy and Impiety. However, these Gentlemen relish'd his Complements, much more than they resented his

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his Raillerys : They seem'd to forget all that was past, and cajol'd him in their turn ; which produc'd a very edifying Scene.

As Mr. Bayle had always maintain'd, that his Doctrine concerning the weakness of Human Reason, &c. was exactly that of the Reform'd Divines, and particularly of Mr. Jurieu ; this Minister endeavor'd to find out a difference between 'em, but declar'd at the same time, *That the unlimited Power and Sovereignty of God over the Creatures, is that which ought to put Men to silence, especially with regard to whatever disturbs or wounds our Reason in the Methods of Providence ; and that this alone destroys all the Difficultys of the Manicheans.* Yet this was the very thing Mr. Bayle always contended for ; he shew'd that these Difficultys were not to be resolv'd by Reason ; and concluded, we ought not to appeal to it in these matters, but submit intirely to Revelation. Mr. Jurieu shew'd afterwards, that St. Paul had foreseen all these Objections in his IXth Chapter to the Romans, and had given the only solid Answer to 'em, to wit, the Sovereignty of God over his Creatures, and the Incomprehensibility

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of his Conduct. He concluded from that passage where the Apostle crys out, *O the Depth ! &c. that it's as plain as noon day, that the design of these words is to check the rashness of those false Learned, who wou'd have us clear all the Difficultys by the Lights of human Reason, and by their Philosophical Maxims, or acknowledged that Reason and Divine Revelation are incompatible ; as if what is above Reason, were always contrary to Reason. But it must be own'd, adds he, that this pious Exclamation of St. Paul shews the Error of those Divines who wou'd find a way of reconciling Reason and Revelation by their Pelagian Maxims. You see, my Lord, by these last words, what a Judgment Mr. Jurieu made on the System of Messieurs Jaquelot and Le Clerc. What he said of it a little before is still stronger : I wou'd fain know, says he, why so many considerable Divines are startled at this Doctrine, of the unlimited Power of God, and his Sovereignty over the Creatures ; and chuse rather to give us Elogys on the Freedom of the Creature, and the Excellency of Liberty. This is very fine ; but it's of no service on this occasion, and besides, it leads directly to Pelagianism. By shutting the door, as we imagine, against*

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the Impiety of the Manicheans and Pyrrhonists, we open another, or rather leave it open; for we can't, adds he, avoid owning that God is Author of this Free-will he has given to Man, and which he is master of, so as to be able to prevent the abuse of it whenever he pleases. By this Method therefore we shall never be able to stop the Mouths of the Profane.

As soon as Mr. Jaquelot saw this Book of Mr. Jurieu's, he made an Addition to his own, in which he animadverted on what he had made Mr. Bayle's Friends say of him. At the same time he attack'd Mr. Jurieu's own System, and pretend-
ed it open'd a door for the terrible Con-
sequences which the *Manicheans* drew from it. *I can't conceive, says he, how a Divine, who seems to have rightly com-
prehended Mr. Bayle's Difficultys against the Hypotheses of those, who take up wholly with this Answer, That we must silence our Reason, shou'd not perceive how it fol-
lows from this System, that Human Reason must be constrain'd by just and necessary Consequences to own, that God is the Cause of Evil, and the Author of Sin.* He afterwards declares, this was what oblig'd him to imbrace another System; and adds, *That they who won't renounce*

those Hypotheses on which Mr. Bayle has founded his Difficultys, are indispensably oblig'd to shew the falsity of his Consequences and Objections, so as to satisfy the Conscience of a rational intelligent Person. Else, says he, it's pure Perverseness, and a Principle of false Honor, to continue in the profession of Doctrines from whence such horrible Consequences are deduc'd.

Mr. Le Clerc, who was in Mr. Jaquelot's Sentiments here, join'd Suffrage with him in the Extract of *his Considerations on Mr. Bayle's Theology*; and took this occasion of exhorting the Calvinists to renounce the Doctrine of Predestination, and imbrace the Arminian Exposition of the IX Chap. to the Romans. *Those Reasons of State, says he, which formerly oblig'd some Persons to maintain the opposite Doctrine, being now ceas'd; 'twere full time to quit a Tenet from which we see there are Consequences to be drawn that are allow'd to be unanswerable. This, adds he, were doing the Reformation the greatest Honor imaginable, by shewing, that if it was capable of entertaining an Error, 'twas as capable of forsaking it.*

I thought my self oblig'd, my Lord, to relate all these Passages, to shew how these

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these Gentlemen justify'd Mr. Bayle by turns, since they all allow'd his Difficultys unanswerable. Mr. Jurieu own'd this with regard to the Arminian System, and Messieurs *Le Clerc* and *Jaquelot* with regard to the Calvinistical. Why then shou'd they unite in the odious Charge against him? Were they not all, and each of 'em, as culpable as he, with regard to one another?

In the Month of *November* of this Year, Mr. Bayle publish'd a 4th Tome of his *Answer to the Country Gentleman's Questions*. It had appear'd in the beginning of Summer, if the Bookseller had not discontinu'd the Impression, to finish some other Works. The principal, and much the greatest part of this Volume, related to Mr. Bernard's Censure on the 2d Tome of the *Continuation of his Reflections on Comets*. Mr. Bayle gave a full Confutation of this Censure; and where any Episodes presented, he never rejected 'em, if they serv'd either to explain or to prove the Points in question: so that in his manner of treating this Subject, in it self abstruse and dry enough, the Reader was entertain'd with a mixture of agreeable Reasonings, Authoritys,

and Historical Reflections. Nay, he advertis'd, that no one shou'd despair, because 'twas an Answer to Mr. Bernard, of meeting with things entertaining in it; and that the whole was as positive and as free from any personal Differences, as if he never had Mr. Bernard, or any other particular Person in view. *Those little Discussions*, says he, *which no way concern the Publick, but consist only in Complaints of Authors, and their reproaches of one another, are seldom to be met with till a third or fourth Reply.* A first Answer, adds he, *is incomparably freer from this Failing; this is intirely exempt from it.* He likewise signify'd, that he had intended to give in this Volume a Confutation of Mr. Bernard's Extracts of his second and third Volume of the *Answer to the Country-Gentleman*. He added, that this Confutation had bin ready of a long time; that it turn'd upon Matters no less various than important; and that it was, in a word, such as an Author might have some impatience to see publish'd: yet that he was oblig'd to postpone it to a fifth Volume, in consideration of his Bookseller, who was concern'd in Interest to finish other Works which had bin in the

the Press for some Years past. Besides, he was busy in drawing up an Answer to Messieurs *Le Clerc* and *Jaquelot's* last Pieces, without the least regard to the state of his Health.

For above a Year past he had bin troubled with a Cough, and a Defluxion on his Lungs, which had already touch'd those Parts, and began insensibly to waist him. The Distemper proceeded not either from his hard Labor or Study, but was hereditary in his Family; his Mother, Grandmother, and some of his Uncles and Aunts having died of it. So he look'd on it as incurable, and cou'd never be prevail'd on by his Friends to take any Physick: He always told 'em, the best Remedys for this Distemper cou'd at most serve only to spin out a languishing Life to a little more length; which he look'd on as a Misfortune rather than an Advantage. He saw Death advancing upon him without terror, and even without uneasiness: and without either dreading or desiring, he look'd at it with a Tranquillity truly worthy of a Philosopher. Only Sadness and Melancholy, the inseparable Companions of Distempers of this kind, had in a manner made him
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renounce all Society, and he beg'd his Friends not to take it ill. For all this he work'd without intermission. He had finish'd his last Answer to Messieurs *Le Clerc* and *Jaquelot*, in the way of Dialogue; the Partys to which were *Maximus* and *Themistes*. What concern'd Mr. *Le Clerc* was already printed, and the best part of his Reply to Mr. *Jaquelot*. He had answer'd all his Objections, and afterwards launch'd into some Reflections on certain Passages of this Minister's Book, which were to be the Conclusion of his Work. He sat to it for some part of the Night, and design'd to resume his Pen the next Morning, when his Landlady hapned to come into the Room. He talk'd to her as usual, and the next moment was found dead in his Bed, without being heard to fetch the least Sigh. 'Twas the 28th of December 1706. when this great Man finish'd his Course. He made his old and faithful Friend Mr. *Basnage* his sole Heir; a Person no less illustrious for his Vertue and Merit, than for the excellent Works with which he has enrich'd the Publick. I have bin inform'd he had left Mademoiselle *Bayle* his Niece a Legacy of 1000 Florins;

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but having heard that she died the *October* before, he dispos'd of this Sum in favor of Mr. *de Bruquieres* his Cousin by the Mother's side, and the nearest Relation he had. He bequeath'd all his Books of Polite Learning and Profane History to Mr. *Paets*, Secretary to the Admiralty of *Amsterdam*, who moves with so much Glory in the footsteps of his Father. By this he wou'd express his Gratitude for the Favors he had receiv'd from this illustrious Family, and particularly from Madame *Paets*, who had left him a Legacy of two thousand Florins in 1683. These, my Lord, are Particulars I have bin assur'd are true. Tho if they be really so, Mr. *Bayle* must have made this Disposition by a Codicil or private Deed; for I am satisfy'd from very good hands, that Mr. *Basnage* was left universal Heir by his Will made in the presence of a Publick Notary.

You, my Lord, don't, I suppose, expect I shou'd here attempt to draw a Picture of Mr. *Bayle*. You knew him too well to need any further Informations on this Head. I shall therefore only point at some of the principal Lineaments in his Character, which I'm persuaded

suaded your Lordship will readily acknowledge. He was truly a Philosopher in his manners, free from all haughtiness and ambition, never preferring himself before others; sober to frugality, and even to insensibility. Indifferent to all kinds of Pleasure except those of the Mind, he seem'd to be above the reach of the Passions. The Honesty and Uprightness of his Soul gain'd him the Esteem and Affections of all who knew him. He was a faithful and obliging Friend, sparing no pains nor trouble whenever there was an opportunity of doing Service. His Conversation was chearful, agreeable and instructive. His way of writing render'd him the delight of men of Wit. He was esteem'd far and near, but particularly in *France*, where notwithstanding the difference of Religion, his Death was sensibly regretted. The illustrious Body, which with so much Glory imploy themselves in the *Journal des Savans*, have publicly express'd their sorrow for Mr. Bayle, when speaking of his Death they declare, *that the Year cou'd not end with a more sensible loss to the Republick of Letters.* He had made considerable Common-place Books in his Youth; but from the time he began

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began to write, he trusted to his Memory, or rather imploy'd the Materials as they presented. But tho his Memory, always happy and faithful, deliver'd him *à propos* whatever he had committed to it, the minute he made the Demand; yet he always took care to verify his Citations to the greatest nicety. He examin'd Historical Facts with an Exactness which border'd on Scrupulosity, and seem'd to be born for retrieving the Faults which others had made, or the Errors they had too lightly suffer'd to pass. Most Readers think themselves so little interested in Historical Relations, that they seldom or never will be at the trouble of discussing 'em. They take 'em for granted, and repeat 'em upon the Credit of him who has examin'd 'em, or who vends 'em with an assurance. Mr. Bayle wou'd never be impos'd on by the Authority of the most celebrated Authors. He scan'd those Facts which have bin look'd on as the most undoubted, and never was discourag'd by the Difficultys which arise in discussing the minutest Circumstances. He had stock'd himself with the Books of all Partys, in order to the discovery of the Truth, by confronting their

their Relations, ever different, and very often opposite. Never did any man make a greater use of this kind of Writings: He rais'd 'em out of the Dust where they had lain buried for Ages past, and made 'em subservient to the coming at the Truth of several Facts never contested before, and which it was but just they shou'd. Equally void of a Spirit of Interest and Passion, he always pay'd homage to the Truth, in whatever Party he met with it. He every where applauded Vertue, and gave no quarter to Vice.

His Penetration represented the deepest and most abstruse Matters to him at the first sight, and by all their different Views; unfolded all their Difficultys, and discover'd their remotest Consequences. 'Twas this rendred him so cautious in his Judgments. He perceiv'd things which others cou'd not spy; and finding no Solutions for the Objections he discover'd, he left the Matters undetermin'd. This Reserve brought him under a charge of Pyrrhonism. But if hereby be meant, that he wou'd not allow Evidence to be the Character of Truth, 'tis the most ill-grounded Accusation in nature. If it only means
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that he doubted of things which appear'd doubtful, and in a word always form'd his Judgments on the report of his Ideas; this is the greatest Honor can be done him. This kind of Pyrrhonism is the perfection of the Human Understanding. If he affirm'd not so often as others, 'twas because he perceiv'd the Difficultys better. Positiveness and Credulity are the Daughters of Ignorance; and we see Men always less credulous and less decisive in proportion to their attainments in Knowledg. They are also more equitable and more modest. 'Tis with a design of inspiring these Vertues, that Mr. *Bayle* takes so many occasions of shewing the narrow Limits of our Reason, and the little Extent of Human Knowledg. He propos'd the same design, when he shews that Opinions accounted indubitable heretofore, are attended with real Difficultys; and others which have pass'd for ridiculous, are to be supported by very probable Reasons. But the nature of most Men is such, that they don't like being undeceiv'd. They look on their Prejudices as a part of themselves; and 'tis with grief and reluctance they see Opinions torn from 'em, which they have adopted
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of old, and which they consider as some of their finest Feathers. For this reason Mr. Bayle had done well, not to have carry'd his Talent of forming Difficultys and Doubts to such a length. While he endeavors to humble the Pride of Reason, he does not manage the Publick enough. He has given a swing to his Imagination, and has often taken Libertys, which may be properly call'd Debauches of the Understanding.

He has protested more than once to his intimate Friends, that he believ'd a God, a Being infinitely Perfect; and always spoke of the other Mysterys of Religion just as the Reform'd do. His Adversarys, 'tis true, endeavor'd to render him suspected on this Head: but he let 'em see, that he said no more at bottom, than what the Divines of his Communion constantly teach. This they cou'd not disown; and therefore were driven to this poor shift, that there was this difference between him and them; They talk'd seriously, and he only in raillery and ridicule. But was not this searching into his Heart, and founding his Intentions? I must add, that whatever free Thoughts might have drop'd from him, were at first only

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only cursorily glanc'd at, or else consisted in Speculations so abstracted, that not one Reader of a hundred was capable of comprehending 'em. If he afterwards enlarg'd upon 'em, he was forc'd to it by his Enemys, who put him upon defending himself. Farther still, they have drawn Consequences from his Principles, which he constantly deny'd; and ascrib'd pernicious Designs to him, which he always disown'd. If there be any Poison in his Works, 'tis they have prest it out, 'tis they have rendred it mortal. So that Mr. Bayle's Reasonings are dangerous only in their Reflections upon 'em; there all their Venom is extracted, and one must have recourse to his Defences for an Antidote.

He disputed without heat, and never assum'd a Magisterial Air; nor was known to make his Adversarys feel the Ascendant he had over 'em. If he hapned now and then to give 'em a wipe, 'twas more in a pleasant than in a morose way. His Raillerys were fine, his Reproaches moderate, and his Censures gentle and good-natur'd. And therefore People were the more surpriz'd to find him in his last Disputes depart
from

from that Temper and Moderation which were so natural to him. But he was somewhat sour'd, and piqu'd at his Enemys striking rather at his Person than his Doctrines, and industriously endeavoring to draw the publick Indignation upon him. He believ'd they design'd no less than his Ruin, and this he thought gave him a right of repelling Force by Force. The manner in which some of 'em have treated him since his Death, too plainly shews that their falling so violently upon him was not so much out of Zeal for the Truth, as to gratify their Spite. They are furiously set against him still, and take all occasions of exposing him; as if they design'd their Resentments shou'd never die. But all their Invectives and affected Scorn rebound only on themselves. Humanity is startled at the cruel Treatment; and whoever has the least spark of Honor, must needs be scandaliz'd to see 'em spurn the Dead, and give a thousand Stabs to one who is now no more than a handful of Dust. The implacable Resentments of Divines have given rise to the Proverb, *Odium Theologicum*. Yet we were willing to believe this was peculiar to some Divines
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of a lower Order, such as those whom Mr. *Le Clerc* treats with the stile of *Populace* and *Canaille*. The more eminent seem'd to be excepted out of the Rule, and rank'd in a superior Order. But what will become of this Distinction now, when the higher sort invade the Birthright of the rest, and stretch it even farther than they? The Jest of it is, that these very Men recommend Moderation and Charity in all their Works; and if we'll believe themselves, are perfectly eaten up with Zeal for the House of God. Yet the Christian Religion never inspir'd a Conduct like this, and 'tis dishonoring the Heavenly Doctrine to make it a cloke to so shameful a Practice.

However, I don't pretend these Gentlemen were oblig'd by Mr. *Bayle's* Death not to write against him at all; tho perhaps they had better have let it alone: But this is not the Point. I only mean, that in their last Answers they ought to have confin'd themselves to a fair Discussion of his Reasonings, and not have larded 'em with railing abusive Language, which at best can only serve to shew, that they who are so far transported by their Resentments,

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ments, are next door to being beside themselves.

Neither is the Question here what Mr. Bayle's Opinions were, but what strange ways have bin taken to confute 'em. Instead of answering his Arguments according to the Rules of right Reasoning, his Adversarys run upon personal Demurs against him, which no body is at all concern'd in. If Mr. Bayle has had underhand Intentions and dangerous Designs, this is a personal Charge against himself, and not the Cause of the Publick, or of any of his Friends. They who only search after Truth, will trouble themselves very little with examining, whether these Imputations be just and well grounded: this is not their business; they'll still recur to the general Question, and look upon any thing else as wholly foreign to the Matter. Besides, these Gentlemen cou'd not be ignorant that almost all the Catholick, and the greatest part of the Protestant Divines, openly maintain the same Doctrines concerning Predestination, Free-will, &c. And why then shou'd they fall upon Mr. Bayle alone, and take him singly to task? Must not this have

proceeded

proceeded purely from a fear of the Magistrate, hindring their attacking directly the Calvinist Divines? They were overjoy'd at an occasion of pelting 'em securely, and by a side Wind, in the Person of Mr. Bayle. This he saw, and no doubt laugh'd in his sleeve at the profound silence of these Divines on this occasion. He well knew that if they enter'd into the Dispute, they must adjudg him the Cause against Messieurs *Le Clerc* and *Jaquelot*. Your Lordship has seen that Mr. *Jurieu* condemn'd both their Systems; Mr. *La Placette* did the same, tho in a very modest manner. He declar'd, that these Gentlemen had built upon Foundations, which to him appear'd not at all solid, nor generally receiv'd: so that 'twere to be wish'd some other Person wou'd enter the Lists, and examine the Manichean Objections, by comparing 'em, upon Principles clearer and less contested. As much as to say, he look'd on the Arminian System as erroneous, and consequently incapable of solving the Difficultys propos'd by Mr. Bayle; which was expressly adjudging him the Victory. But on the other hand, as Mr. *La Placette* follow'd the Calvinistical Hypothesis, Mr. *Le Clerc* cou'd

cou'd not forbear expressing his Joy at this Work's not appearing before Mr. Bayle's Death ; because, says he, if he had seen it, he wou'd have own'd himself ready to subscribe to it, without changing Opinion ; and pretended he was as Orthodox as Mr. *La Placette*. By this Mr. *Le Clerc* wou'd insinuate, he saw no difference between Mr. Bayle's and Mr. *La Placette*'s Principles.

To these two Testimonys of Mr. Bayle's Victory over Mr. *Le Clerc* and Mr. *Jaquelot*, I shall add a third, whose Suffrage is so much the freer from Suspicion, as he does not in the least spare Mr. Bayle, in a Book lately publish'd by him. Mr. *Naudé* is the Man I mean : He affirms Mr. *Jaquelot* was worsted by Mr. Bayle, that he was fairly run down, and forc'd to contradict himself ; and proves it by discussing their Arguments at large, and confronting the Writings o' both sides. Mr. *Naudé* judg'd as little favorably of Mr. *Le Clerc*, after he had seen his last Answer to the Dialogue between *Maximus* and *Themistes*. He says, he shou'd be glad that all equitable Persons, and all the ablest Philosophers of Europe wou'd fairly compare this Answer with his own Work ; and he persuades

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persuades himself they must own, he replies at least to the Objections of the *Manicheans*, and that Mr. Le Clerc in no wise does: For in fine, adds he, let any ingenuous Person read in Mr. Bayle's *Dialogues*, where they relate to Mr. Le Clerc, all that is not merely personal, but what directly concerns the Dispute of the *Manicheans* against *Arminianism*, and afterwards read over Mr. Le Clerc's Answer in the XIIth Tome of his *Bibliothèque Choisie*; and I am persuaded he'll own, Mr. Le Clerc does not so much as glance at Mr. Bayle's Objections, but leaves all his wretched *Arminianism* in the lurch, sunk and overwhelm'd with the weight of the same Objections: I say, the very same terrible Objections with which he himself had always pretended to crush the *Supralapsarians* in the first place, and generally all the Reform'd, as if they alone had given ground to these Objections, when no one is now so blind as not to see that 'tis Christianity in general which opens the door to 'em. In the mean time Mr. Le Clerc does no more than just endeavor to save himself by shuffling and talking backwards and forwards, and even departing from the plain and express Doctrine of Scripture, with-

The Life of Mr. Bayle.

out giving Mr. Bayle one single categorical
Answer, or offering a syllable of any force
 to ward off his stunning blows. He af-
 terwards says, that Mr. Le Clerc is
 forc'd to have recourse to the *Glory of*
God as well as the *Calvinists*: Tho he
 does not follow their Method, nor can
 have the same benefit by it. "He does
 " it, *says he*, by unfairly dissembling
 " that he is struck and embarras'd with
 " the same Objections that we are;
 " and this with a design of keeping up
 " the Spirit of the Ignorant in his own
 " Party, which he and his Brethren
 " have all along entertain'd in Opini-
 " ons very wide of this Truth; but
 " which were very false at the same
 " time, as Mr. Bayle has at least given
 " us the pleasure of making those per-
 " ceive very sensibly, who won't put
 " out their Eyes for fear they shou'd
 " see it. But we, *adds he*, we do it
 " by the Grace and Assistance of God,
 " while we receive these Objections
 " such as they are, look 'em undaun-
 " tedly in the face, and overthrow 'em
 " at the same time. No doubt Mr.
 Le Clerc resents a new and lively Joy,
 to think that the *Treatise of the Sovereign*
Perfection of God was not publish'd till
 after

after his Adversary's Death. But 'tis time to resume Mr. Bayle's Character.

He had all along preserv'd a tender Love for his Country. Jealous to Excess of the Glory of his Nation, he cou'd not with any Patience hear it run down; and he even had a Contempt for those who did not esteem it as highly as himself. This was a Failing which all his Friends cou'd never correct in him: I call it a Failing, because so thorow a Philosopher as he ought to have had larger Thoughts. Nothing is more ordinary than to find those in all Countrys, and even such as are above the common Rank, who fancy their own the only Nation which has engroft all human Perfections. This is pardonable in them, because with all their Wit and good Sense they stedfastly retain several vulgar Prejudices. But People have not the same Indulgence for a Philosopher, who has taken a strict Survey of all his Opinions, and judges of 'em without the least respect of Persons. Mr. Bayle's affectionate way of speaking sometimes of his Country, had given his Enemys a handle for accusing him of being a Spy, and a Pensioner to the Court of *France*: a Consequence so

absurd, and so grievous a Calumny, that I'm at a loss to conceive how one of his latest Antagonists cou'd in this point strike in with Mr. *Jurieu*: *Furor arma ministrat*. But all who knew Mr. Bayle did him Justice, and I dare take the liberty of reckoning your Lordship in this number.

Your Lordship desir'd to know who were Mr. Bayle's Friends and Correspondents in the several parts of *Europe*. Those I can at present call to mind, besides such as I have already nam'd, were the Duke of *Noailles* in *France*, who honors the *Belles Lettres* by his Love for Learned Men, and by his Application to Study: The *Abbé Bignon*, no less distinguish'd by his great Parts, than by that generous Protection he affords the Arts and Sciences; *P. Malebranche*; the two *P's Lami*; Messieurs *Pinson*, *Rainsan*, de la *Monnoye*, *Marais*, *Longepierre*; Mr. Bayle Professor in Philosophy at *Tholouse*, who was no way related to him tho of the same Name, &c. In *Germany*, Mr. *L'Enfant*, Minister of the French Church of *Berlin*, and Chaplain to the King of *Prussia*; the Illustrious Mr. *Leibnitz*; Messieurs *Ancillon*, *Thomasius*, *Buddeus*, &c. In *Italy*, Mr. *Magliabecchi*, Library Keeper

Keeper to the Great Duke of *Tuscany*.
At *Geneva*, Mr. *Pictet*, Minister, and
Professor in Divinity; Mr. *Chouet*, Syndic
of the Republick, &c. Your Lordship
knows, he had the honor of being es-
teem'd by several Persons of Quality in
England; but I don't think he held a
Correspondence with any of the Learned
of that Kingdom. His Correspondents
on that side the Water were *French*, as
Mr. *La Riviere*, Minister of the *French*
Church at the *Savoy*; Mr. *Le Vassor*;
Mr. *La Roque Boyer*, Minister at *Wind-*
for; Messieurs *Pujolas*, *Silvestre*, *Des*
Maizeaux, *Coste*, &c.

As I endeavor to avoid Flattery as
much as possible, and pay homage only
to Truth, I shan't go about to dissemble
the hardest Article against Mr. *Bayle*, to
wit, That he had taken too great a liber-
ty in some parts of his *Dictionary*, and
talk'd somewhat too smuttily upon the
Affairs of Women. 'Tis certain, what
he says upon this Subject consists for
the most part of Citations from grave
Authors, who had never bin the less
esteem'd for having written a little too
licentiously. 'Tis true too, that *Mon-*
tagne and several others had taken
infinitely a greater liberty. But all
this

this does not acquit him with Persons who set up for rigid and refin'd Vertue; besides, it shocks the Civility and Politeness of our Age. Mr. Bayle did not consider, that he wrote in a Language the chastest in the World; and that if the Authors he read had wrote at the same time he did, and in the same Language, they must have wrap'd up in cleaner Expressions, or the World had not born 'em. The truth is, the gross Obscenitys he met with in their Writings made him consider, as very innocent Libertys, and Sallys of Wit, what the World accounts much otherwise in this Age. We are told, that our own Times are a great deal more corrupted than those of our Fathers; and yet we find they express'd themselves with less Reserve and Precaution than we. This must have proceeded from the Heart's being less corrupt in them: loose, and even smutty Expressions, made but little Impression; their Imagination was not defil'd, nor their Vertue endanger'd by 'em. Now this was precisely Mr. Bayle's Case. He did not find himself shock'd by the loose Expressions he us'd; he even believ'd 'em innocent, because they produc'd no Disorder in himself.

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himself. In effect, his Life has bin always so regular, that his bitterest Enemies cou'd never reproach him with any thing on this head. His Manners fell not short of those of the best of Christians; and among such as addict themselves to Philosophy, very few are to be found who live so perfectly like Philosophers as he. All the Vertues which render a Man truly valuable, were to be met with in him; his Integrity, his Innocence, his Humility, his Temperance, his Equity, his Contempt of the World, his Disinterestedness, were perfectly exemplary. 'Twas by this part of him, as I have already observ'd, he had the good Fortune of pleasing your Lordship, and meriting your Protection. And this was the principal reason which mov'd you to desire an Account of his Life. I shall think my self infinitely happy, my Lord, if this proves not altogether unworthy your Notice; and if you will be pleas'd to look upon it as some small Mark of my Gratitude, and of that profound Respect with which I am,

My Lord,

Dec. 1. 1707.

Your Lordship's most obedient,

humble Servant.

BOOKS written by Mr. BAYLE.

Miscellaneous Reflections on occasion of the Comet which appear'd in December, 1680. Written to a Doctor of the Sorbon, in 12mo. The first Edition appear'd in 1682, the second in 1683, the third in 1699, and the fourth in 1704.

A general Criticism on the History of Calvinism of P. Maimbourg, 2 vol. in 12mo. The first and second Edition appear'd in 1682, and the third in 1684.

New Letters of the Author of the Critique Generale on the History of Calvinism, by P. Maimbourg. 2 vol. 1685.

The History of the Republick of Letters, in 12mo. from March 1684. to March 1687. inclusive.

An Answer of the Author of the History of the Republick of Letters to the Advice given him upon his having spoke in favor of P. Malebranche about the Pleasures of Sense, &c. 12mo. 1686.

France intirely Catholick under the Reign of Lewis the Great, in 12mo. 1686.

A Philosophical Commentary on these Words of JESUS CHRIST, Compel 'em to come in,

in, &c. 4 vol. in 12mo. The first and second printed in 1686, the third in 1687, the fourth in 1688.

The Chimerical Cabal, or a Confutation of the fabulous Account and Calumnys which Mr. Jurieu has maliciously publish'd concerning a certain Project of Peace, and concerning a Libel intitul'd, Important Advice to the Refugees, on their approaching Return into France, in his Considerations on this Libel. In 12mo, two Editions in 1691.

A Letter concerning the little Books publish'd against the Chimerical Cabal, in 12mo. half a Sheet, 1691.

The Chimericalness of the Cabal of Rotterdam demonstrated from the pretended Convictions which Mr. Jurieu has publish'd against Mr. Bayle, in 12mo. 1691.

Janua Cœlorum reſerata cunctis Religio-nibus à celebri admodum viro Domino Petro Jurieu, &c. in 4to. 1692.

The Project and Eſſay towards a Critical Dic-tionary, in 8vo. 1692.

New Advice to the little Author of the little Books, in 12mo. 1692.

An Addition to the Miscellaneous Reflec-tions on Comets, or an Answer to a Libel intitul'd, A ſhort Review, &c. in 12mo. 1694.

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Second Edition at Amsterdam 1703. in 12. p. 131.

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F I N I S.

